Middle Powers In The Modern State System: A Case Study of Australia's Role As A Regional Actor

by

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DECLARATION

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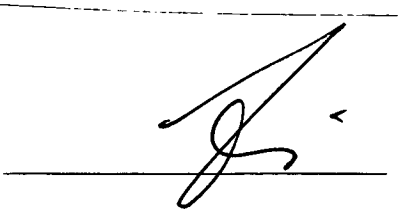

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ABSTRACT

Foreign policy represents the effort of a state to defend its interests in international relations, and power encapsulates the various factors that measure the limits of a state's capacity in the promotion of its national interests. This thesis examines the various factors, under the rubric of power, which has guided the foreign policy of a middle power, Australia. It argues that middle powers occupy a special niche within the context of regional subsets of the general state system. It demonstrates that a middle power, like Australia, is attracted to the use of multilateral institutional arrangements, as a vehicle for influence in foreign policy, to defend general interests within its geographic region. Four geographic regions, the South West Pacific, the Antarctic region, the South East Asian region and the Indian Ocean region, are surveyed. This thesis finds that multilateral institutional arrangements have become the primary agency of Australia's regional influence as a middle power but concludes that the utility of regional arrangements varies with the geographic context in which a middle power is situated.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

This has been a long and arduous apprenticeship in the vocation of scholarship, and through it all, I have been fortunate in the friendship and guidance of my supervisor. I owe Richard Herr a great deal, from corny jokes (of which he seems to have an endless supply) to the proper appreciation for American football, and a keen desire to improve my own cooking skills. Most of all, I owe him a debt for his support, which he has provided in spite of the fact that the period of my studies corresponded with a difficult time for us both.

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INTRODUCTION

This is a study of middle powers in international relations. More specifically, this is a critique of Australian foreign policy. This thesis tests the hypothesis that multilateral institutional arrangements enhance the capacity of a middle power like Australia to assume a role of leadership and influence within its geographic region. To define the context, in which states interact with one another, this thesis begins with a discussion of the state system. This is followed by an analysis of Australia's role as a middle power within its geographic region. It concludes by arguing that Australia's experience within its immediate geographic region provides sufficient evidence to validate the hypothesis.

In international relations theory, there is a longstanding divide between the Realists and Idealists with regard to the premises held about the nature of states and their relationships with one another. The Realist perspective of states is one of egotistical and self-serving actors, and so they essentially see international relations as a contest for power in furtherance of self-interest. In contrast, Idealists put their faith in ideals that take precedence over self-interest and tend to believe in the viability of a state system bound by rules based on universal principles – rules that states would honour. However, both these traditional perspectives have been challenged by the accumulated weight of change in the modern state system. The growing range of transboundary activity between states and the kaleidoscope of inter-state relationships in the modern era have led to the proliferation of international institutions, particularly in the form of international organisations or regimes, to regulate these relationships. These changes introduce a new element of complexity

into the discourse on international relations. A new divide (or perhaps it is the old divide with new sets of jargon) has emerged. The Inheritors of the idealist tradition, such as Neoliberalists or Institutionalists, contend that international institutions embody patterns of behaviour based on the expectations, customs and laws of states within the state system. Thus, Institutionalists argue that such institutions represent a framework upon which states order their relationships with one another and should be regarded as significant actors within the state-system in their own right. In contrast, the Neorealist heirs to the Realist tradition, argue that *realpolitik* still apply in international politics in spite of international institutions, and that the imperatives driving the national interests of egotistical self-serving states would always override any potential for a sustainable universal order in the state system. This divide between the Neoliberalists/Institutionalists and the Neorealists in international relations theory informs an important component of the approach this paper takes to the role of middle powers in the modern state system.

This thesis is also premised on the assumption that states can be usefully differentiated from one another and labelled as great, middle or small powers. Some writers have found it convenient to classify states in terms of their capacity for influence in international relations.[1] They argue that small powers have little or no influence in international affairs whereas great powers have a wide range of interests and the capacity to defend those interests. Middle powers fall into the largely unexplored chasm in knowledge between the two. Relatively little is known of middle powers save their capacity to assert themselves beyond their own territorial boundaries and defend limited interests within the general state system, or at least in

[1] Martin Wight, Power Politics, Hedley Bull & Carsten Holbraad (eds.), London, Leicester University Press, 1995. John Fitzpatrick, 'Power Structures in the Asia-Pacific Region', in Asian Defence Policies: Great Powers and Regional Powers, Geelong, Deakin University Press, 1992. pp1-28.

their geographic region.[2] Instead, much of the literature on international relations theory has focused on the role that great powers play in international arrangements.[3]

Many of the theories on international relations are derived from studies of 'change' and 'effect' in the state system. As great powers have often been the agents of 'change' and are seen as the states best able to stamp their influence on the state system, they have frequently been the subjects of study in international relations. While such studies are informative and have guided much of the debate in international relations, their emphasis on great powers might distort or bias our understanding of the motives and actions of the majority of states within the state system that are not great powers. Thus, Carsten Holbraad warns that:

> "Those who concentrate exclusively on the interrelations of the great powers enjoy the obvious advantages of dealing with the chief actors but are in danger of taking a too Olympian view of international politics."[4]

Great powers are guided by considerations of international policy, as well as by their own capabilities for unilateral action, that less powerful states do not possess. To extrapolate from the motives and actions of great powers, and then apply such generalisations as a theory to how smaller states behave in the state system is likely to prove inappropriate and inaccurate. For example, a survey found that Americans were concerned about their trade relationship with Japan and resistant to any regime

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[2] Martin Wight, Power Politics.

[3] Among the 'classics' of this line of analysis are: Edward Hallett Carr, The Twenty Years' Crisis, 1919-1939 : An Introduction To The Study Of International Relations, London, Macmillan and Co., 1939. Hans J. Morgenthau, Politics Among Nations: The Struggle for Power and Peace, (fifth Edition), New York, Knopf, 1985. Robert, O. Keohane, After Hegemony: Cooperation and Discord in the World Political Economy, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1984. Paul Kennedy, The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers: Economic Change and Military Conflict Since 1500 to 2000, London, Fortuna Press. 1989.

[4] Carsten Holbraad, Middle Powers In International Politics, London, Macmillan, 1984. p3.

that might result in greater relative gains for Japan.[5] Neorealists have used this as an example of how considerations of relative gain could override considerations of absolute gain.[6] However, this is not the case with Australia, which does not appear to possess similar concerns with respect to its trade relationship with the United States even though the relative gains in this trade relationship are clearly in favour of the United States. Therefore, theories on international relations based on studies of great powers might not accurately or adequately address the motives and actions of states that are not great powers, and as such, they present an incomplete account of international relations. Moreover, there are very few states that may consider themselves great powers.[7] Instead, the state system comprises mainly small and middle powers. Therefore, a better understanding of the motives and actions of states that are not great powers is required for a broader appreciation of the state system, as opposed to a review of the star actors that usually command the spotlight on the world stage.

This thesis investigates the role of middle powers through the experience of Australia within regional institutional structures in the state system. It assumes that Australia is an egotistical state actor whose primary concern is the pursuit of narrow national interests in international relations.[8] It queries the manner by which Australia is best able to assert its influence within the state system and the extent to which Australia

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[5] Micheal Mastanduno, 'Do Relative Gains Matter? America's Response To Japanese Industrial Policy', in Neorealism and Neoliberalism: The Contemporary Debate, David A. Baldwin (ed.), New York, Columbia University Press, 1993. pp250-264.

[6] Micheal Mastanduno, 'Do Relative Gains Matter? America's Response To Japanese Industrial Policy'. pp250-264.

[7] Henry Kissinger has noted that the international system of the twenty-first century will probably only contain 6 major powers, and a "multiplicity of medium-sized and smaller countries". Henry A. Kissinger, Diplomacy, New York, Simon & Schuster, 1994. pp23-24.

[8] While idealists would challenge a discussion of international relations premised on egotistical self interest by states, both the Neoliberalists and the Neorealists operate from the premise of egotistical state actors in international relations. Although discussion on the merits of the alternative theoretical positions on the state system is not the focus of this study, the arguments advanced in this thesis are probably more inclined towards Neoliberalism. They emphasise international institutions as a

may protect and pursue its interests by influencing the shape of the international arrangements affecting its interests. Krasner suggests that in:

> "... a power-oriented research programme, power is exercised not to facilitate cooperation but to secure a more favorable distribution of benefits. And analysis seeks to explain outcomes in terms of interests and relative capabilities rather than in terms of institutions designed to promote Pareto optimality."[9]

In accordance with the assumption of egotistical state interest, this paper explores Australia's efforts to secure "a more favorable distribution of benefits"[10] through multilateral arrangements within its region, as well as the manner in which such regional arrangements reflect the "interests and relative capabilities" of the states involved. It examines the significance of power, in terms of Australia's capacity to control the international environment that it is a part of, and its endeavour to order the arrangements within that environment in its best interests. The intent is to explain the motivations that might prompt a middle power such as Australia into multilateral institutional arrangements and the extent to which its capabilities, relative to that of other states, provide it with the opportunity to secure beneficial outcomes. Holbraad advises that:

> "[A]n analysis of the conduct of middle-ranking powers may not only illuminate the international system from an unfamiliar perspective but may also present some of its processes in a perspective truer than those frequently associated with either traditional or more novel approaches."[11]

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significant factor in international relations and the propensity of middle powers to address their concerns through such institutions.

[9] Stephen Krasner, 'Global Communications and National Power', in Neorealism and Neoliberalism: The Contemporary Debate, David A. Baldwin (ed.), New York, Columbia University Press, 1993. p243.

[10] The spelling of certain words in this thesis is generally based on a British dictionary but where American authors have been cited, the American spelling has been retained.

[11] Carsten Holbraad, Middle Powers In International Politics. p4.

Therefore, it is hoped that this study of middle power motivations and capabilities will advance the understanding of egotistical state behaviour, as well as provide a useful beginning for further comparative studies on how different states behave.

Australian foreign policy has been traditionally dominated by three factors throughout its history. Its sense of vulnerability as a Western nation situated at the edge of Asia, its values and ideals as a nation, and its economic interests in an ever-changing world.[12] These are the broad themes underlying Australia's engagement with the other nations in its region and the rest of the world. In the pursuit of these interests, Australia has traditionally sought the protection of a 'great and powerful friend'.[13] Great Britain and the United States have both served in this role as great power allies to Australia. However, changes in the global geopolitical environment within the past decade have resulted in the reappraisal of foreign policy for many nations, including Australia. In particular, Australia's geographic region has experienced radical transformation into "a more complex and changeable strategic environment."[14] The Cold War has ended and with its conclusion, the state-system is no longer polarised into two opposing camps. Australia's Southeast Asian neighbours have developed rapidly and narrowed the gap, in terms of both economic wealth and military capability, between themselves and Australia. The United Nations Law of the Sea has also raised issues concerning overlapping jurisdiction and resource management in the maritime environment that have been previously quiescent or overshadowed by other interests. These and other changes challenged traditional strategic assumptions. Thus, a study of Australia's responses to these

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[12] A.C. Palfreeman, 'The Political Objectives', in In Pursuit of National Interests: Australian Foreign Policy in the 1990s, F.A. Mediansky & A.C. Palfreeman (eds.), Sydney, Pergamon Press, 1988. pp85-105.

[13] Coral Bell, (ed.) Agenda For The Nineties: Studies of the Context for Australian Choices in Foreign and Defence Policy, Melbourne, Longman-Cheshire, 1991.

changes within its geographic region will help to illustrate the considerations that influence the foreign policy of a middle power as it manoeuvres itself to an advantageous position within the state system.

The proliferation of multilateral international regimes in the state system is another significant development that has affected international relations and influenced Australian foreign policy. Crawford notes the fact that "while the contribution that institutions make to stability and world order is far from clear, the contemporary, and global, states system is the most institutionalized in history."[15] Australia has not been untouched by this trend towards the comprehensive institutionalisation of state relations. Security issues that have had their origins elsewhere have troubled the peace of mind in Australia and could pose a genuine threat to Australia's interests, including its sovereignty. The growth of communism in Southeast Asia during the 1960s and more recently the unresolved issue of overlapping jurisdictional claims in the Spratly Islands affected political stability in Australia's region, and the latter could have the potential to escalate into a more direct threat to Australian strategic interests. The currency crisis in Southeast Asia and the sea robberies in the Straits of Malacca that disrupted the traffic of oil to Japan have a direct bearing on Australia's economic interests. Transboundary environmental problems such as pollution or the use of driftnets in the Southwest Pacific fisheries resulting in wasteful bycatch have also been matters of serious concern to Australia. These and other issues have been increasingly addressed by regional multilateral institutional arrangements. Indeed, some might argue that such matters involving transboundary interests could only be addressed through multilateral institutional arrangements. Thus, in view of the

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[14] Defending Australia: Defence White Paper 1994, Canberra, Australian Government Publishing Service, 1994. p11.

[15] Robert M.A. Crawford, Regime Theory in the Post Cold War World: Rethinking Neoliberal Approaches to International relations, Aldershot, Dartmouth, 1996. p3.

increasing consciousness of "global interdependence and the sheer range of international activity that demands some commonly agreed action,"[16] Australia can not afford to be disengaged from the political processes that shape international multilateral arrangements and which inevitably affect its national interests. Therefore, a closer examination of the part that Australia has played in the process of initiating new regimes and Australia's capacity for influence within existing institutional arrangements is necessary, especially in terms of the opportunities that they offer a middle power to secure beneficial outcomes for itself.

In its examination of middle powers, this thesis explores two broad themes. First, it examines the concept of a 'middle power' and what it means to be a middle power in a world where states are differentiated in terms of their capacity to defend their national interests in international relations. The concept of power in international relations has usually been reduced to a question of military strength. Even studies of power focused on multilateral institutions within the state system tend to examine institutional arrangements in the context of how they affected military strength.[17] Thus, there is often an implicit assumption that the disparities in power among states would be mirrored by similar disparities in influence within the institutional arrangements in the state system. In analysing the concept of a middle power, the question of the extent to which the power of a state, in terms of military strength, actually correlates with the power and influence that it may wield through the institutional arrangements of an international multilateral structure shall be addressed. The other significant theme in this thesis is the extent to which states might assert influence through multilateral arrangements in the pursuit of national

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[16] Gareth Evans, 'The Labor Tradition', in Evatt to Evans: The Labor Tradition in Australian Foreign Policy, David Lee & Christopher Waters (eds.), Canberra, Allen & Unwin, 1997. p19

[17] Robert Powell, 'Absolute and Relative Gains' in Neorealism and Neoliberalism: The Contemporary Debate, David A. Baldwin (ed.), New York, Columbia University Press, 1993. pp209-233.

interests. To appreciate the role of middle powers in international relations, this thesis explores the concept of a 'currency of influence' within institutional arrangements. By investigating the role that Australia played as a middle power within its geographic region, this thesis determines the extent to which multilateral institutional arrangements serve as effective vehicles of influence for middle powers, as well as enhance their capacity to affect their international environment. The hypothesis that *multilateral institutional arrangements enhance the capacity of middle powers like Australia to assume a role of leadership and influence within its geographic regions* is tested.

To test the hypothesis, a theoretical model based on pre-defined assumptions, briefly enumerated above, pertaining to the state system, middle powers and institutional arrangements shall be constructed. Such models, according to Huntington, facilitate our ability to:

1. order and generalise about reality;
2. understand causal relationships among phenomena;
3. anticipate and, if we are lucky, predict future developments;
4. distinguish what is important from what is unimportant; and
5. show us what paths we should take to achieve our goals.[18]

The use of theoretical constructs helps to highlight the premises upon which we base our arguments and lend structure to our outlook on issues. As Huntington further elaborates:

> "Simplified paradigms or maps are indispensable for human thought and action. On the one hand, we may explicitly formulate theories or models and consciously use them to guide our behavior. Alternatively, we may deny the need for such guides and assume that we will act only in terms of specific "objective" facts, dealing with each case "on its own merits." If we assume this, however, we delude ourselves. For in the back of our minds are hidden

[18] Samuel P. Huntington, The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order, London, Touchstone, 1998. p30.

> assumptions, biases, and prejudices that determine how we perceive reality, what facts we look at, and how we judge their importance and merits."[19]

However, as with all such constructs, the validity of the assumptions made will be open to challenge. No theory can be presented as an absolute truth. At best, a theory is merely a mindset that guides our outlook on a given issue. The theories advanced by the Realists, Idealists, Rationalists, Neoliberalists, Institutionalists, Neorealists and others are no different. They furnish us with their individually structured perspectives on international relations and in so doing, advance our understanding of the motivations that drive the actions of states, and of how the state system is structured. Thus, like the proverbial glass that is half-full or half-empty depending on how one looks at it, international relations theories are merely guides that are more often reflective of the attitudes of those who hold them than prescriptive standards. They are not always mutually exclusive, and the relevance of one theory in a particular circumstance need not invalidate the applicability of another theory in other circumstances. Where the theories advanced suggest "two simultaneous opposing trends", the challenge lies in the ability to "set forth under what circumstances one trend will prevail and under what circumstances the other will".[20] Nevertheless, it is hoped that within the parameters of this thesis, the assumptions made will be logically consistent and provide coherent structure to the arguments made.

The first chapter examines the nature of the state and the state system, and stipulates the assumptions upon which this thesis is premised. A conceptual framework of how states exist and relate to one another in defence of their individual egotistical interests is constructed to facilitate the discussion. This conceptual framework will

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[19] Samuel P. Huntington, The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order. p30.

account for the concept of powers and the significance of power within the state system. This chapter also investigates the growth of multilateral regimes. Multilateral institutional arrangements have introduced a new dimension to the state system, and play an increasingly significant role as a vehicle of state influence in international relations. This chapter sets out the basis for the contention that states, which possess the appropriate resources, may exploit the opportunities within the framework of multilateral arrangements to defend and pursue their egotistical interests in international relations.

The second chapter follows on from the first by analysing the concept of a middle power. It discusses the features that distinguish a middle power from other powers and examines the difficulties in establishing an all-embracing definition for a middle power. A working definition for a middle power is developed and two templates are constructed to help guide the discussion in the subsequent chapters. The key elements of the first template include highlighting the ambition and capacity to assume significant influence within a geographic region as the critical benchmarks for identifying middle powers. The second template produces a checklist of the factors that underpin a middle power's capacity to manifest significant influence within its region. Together, they establish a methodological framework for the subsequent investigation into the role of Australia as a middle power in its geographic region, and the basis upon which its influence, if any, is based.

The third chapter discusses, in general, the role that Australia has played as a middle power in its region, as well as the context in which Australian foreign policy is framed. The Conservative and the Labor traditions in Australian foreign policy are

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[20] Samuel P. Huntington, The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order. p36.

scrutinised for their attitudes towards international multilateral arrangements, and the bases for those attitudes are discussed. It is argued that Australia is a middle power in a geographic environment undergoing significant geo-political changes. These geo-political changes have challenged traditional premises and Australian priorities in foreign policy. Australia responded to many of these challenges by engaging its region through multilateral international institutions. Thus, it is proposed that the differences between the two traditions in Australian foreign policy on the value of multilateral arrangements are a matter of degree rather than irreconcilable and opposed positions on the need for, and participation in, such multilateral arrangements. This chapter qualifies the ideal type established in the previous chapter with the empirical facts of Australian political culture to provide context to the hypothesis that multilateral institutional arrangements enhance the capacity of middle powers like Australia to assume a role of leadership and influence within its geographic regions. By identifying some of the issues affecting Australian mindsets towards foreign policy, this chapter elaborates upon the framework that has been developed in the previous chapter to facilitate a more in-depth investigation of Australia's role as a middle power within its region in the following chapters.

To establish whether the hypothesis has empirical validity, four politically distinct regions geographically adjacent to Australia will be examined in the second part of the thesis. These are not case studies in the usual sense as the methodological demands and rigorous scrutiny required by a 'proper' case study would not be met. Instead, there is a broad overview followed by a selective focus on the key issues for middle powers and multilateral institutions identified in each region. This is due to a belief that it would be preferable, in this thesis, to identify trends in the practice of foreign policy in the regions around Australia, and then to make a general and

comparative assessment with respect to Australia's role as a middle power; as opposed to an in-depth study of any one region or issue, and then extrapolating from that one case study a general understanding of middle powers. A benefit of the approach selected is that it lends itself to greater opportunities for comparison of Australia's role as a middle power across four regions. For example, Australia's role as a middle power and the issues that it confronts in the South Pacific region may be measured against its role in other regions, with similarities and differences highlighted to provide a general observation on middle powers. A detailed case study of Australian engagement with multilateral arrangements in the South Pacific region might reveal more about Australia's role in the South Pacific but fail to address the considerations that affect its policies as a middle power in general or in other regions. The drawbacks of the approach adopted would be the sacrifice of detail for brevity. In selectively addressing issues in each region, the omission of significant factors that might only be revealed after detailed study in the final analysis would be a greater possibility. Every effort has been made, through an extensive survey of the literature and careful analysis, to identify the issues of consequence that would best serve as exemplars to illustrate the role of middle powers in international relations. Nevertheless, there is, inevitably, an element of subjective judgement involved in the selection of the issues scrutinised, and which would be employed to test the hypothesis that the capacity of middle powers to defend their interests is enhanced by multilateral institutions.

The four regions that shall be examined are the Southwest Pacific, Southeast Asia, Antarctica and the Southern Ocean, and the Indian Ocean. The first three of the four regions discussed are well known for the role that regional institutions have played in shaping the political arrangements for the region, whereas the absence of similar

institutions in the fourth provides an interesting contrast. Multilateral institutional arrangements within these regions will be examined for the opportunities they offer to a middle power like Australia for influence. The dynamics of inter-state relations within these regions, and how regional institutional arrangements affect, and are affected by the relative power of, state actors shall also be investigated. It shall be argued that although the nature and extent of Australian power varied in each of these four regions, multilateral institutional arrangements, formal and informal, consistently represented a reliable vehicle for Australian political influence.

The first of the regions examined (Chapter 4) is the South West Pacific. In the South West Pacific region, the United Nations Law of the Sea has bestowed vast new maritime territories, with attendant rights and obligations, on small states that are ill equipped to shoulder these new responsibilities. This has resulted in the development of a number of regional institutions to pool the collective resources of the small states within the region in response to common interests. Although Australia is generally considered a middle power, the great disparity in power between itself and the other states in this region provided it with the opportunity to assert itself in a manner akin to that of a great power. As a nation situated at the edge of the region, if not within the region itself, Australia has played a significant role in the multilateral arrangements that have emerged in this region. Thus, Australia's participation in multilateral institutional arrangements with the smaller island states in the region raises the interesting question of how a middle power should conduct itself in a regional sub-system where it possesses capabilities akin to that of a great power. This chapter explores the role that Australia played in the regional institutions of the South Pacific. It highlights the means through which Australia has asserted its influence within the region through its role in regional institutions. It argues that in

terms of relative gains, the smaller Pacific Island states gained far more than Australia, but that the latter persisted with cooperation and continued to pursue its interests through regional multilateral arrangements as the preferred option in its dealings with the smaller powers of the South Pacific. Thus, in spite of the asymmetries of power between itself and the other states in the South Pacific region, Australia relied on participation in regional multilateral arrangements as the primary channel of its influence.

The second of the regions examined (Chapter 5) is the Antarctic and the Southern Ocean region. Australia has substantial interests in this region. Australia has claimed 42% of Antarctica and jurisdiction over the waters in the Southern Ocean adjacent to the Australian Antarctic Territory. Australia's sovereignty claims in Antarctica are disputed. However, Australian interests are managed through the Antarctic Treaty System, a melange of interrelated regimes, which regulate international relations and all activity within the Antarctic and Southern Ocean region. This chapter investigates the currency of influence within these regional institutional structures. It contends that as a wealthy and technologically advanced middle power, Australia is able to effectively defend its Antarctic interests through its capacity to influence regional multilateral arrangements. It is proposed that, for Australia, the issue has not been so much whether multilateral institutional arrangements have proven useful in the Antarctic and Southern Ocean region, but rather, whether regional or global multilateral arrangements would better serve Australian interests. In the Antarctic and Southern Ocean region, where pre-existing regulatory arrangements have customarily provided the pattern for State behaviour, the introduction of the United Nations Law of the Sea has resulted in a situation where overlapping regimes have the potential to cause confusion. The concept of 'common heritage', which is derived

from the evolution of the Law of the Sea, has been used to challenge the validity of the Antarctic Treaty System and the privileged position of states like Australia within the latter. These and other issues arising from the overlap between global and regional arrangements pose an interesting dilemma for Australia as an egotistical state actor. In this instance, the issue is whether a middle power like Australia would derive greater gains from unilateral action, or a regional multilateral arrangement, or a global multilateral arrangement. The peculiarities of the Antarctic region and the special interests associated with it give rise to the possibility that it might be a special case, with considerations that would not apply to other regions. Nevertheless, this chapter argues that Australia's experiences in the Antarctic and Southern Ocean region reinforces the proposition that middle powers seek opportunities through regionalism and multilateral institutional arrangements to defend their interests in international relations. It also provides an opportunity for the argument that middle powers like Australia are guided more by their instincts as egotistical state actors than any other considerations. Thus, middle powers do not seek greater institutionalisation of international relations, so much as a set of international arrangements amenable to their interests.

The third region examined (Chapter 6) is the Southeast Asian region. Australia's capacity to defend its interests in the South East Asia is limited by several factors. Australia has always been ambiguous about its place in the South East Asian region, giving rise to the observation that Australia might be "in the region" but it is not "of the region". Unlike the South West Pacific region, the states of the South East Asian region are significantly more powerful. Therefore, the South East Asian states have been better able to resist regional multilateral arrangements when they perceived that such initiatives would place them at a relative disadvantage vis-à-vis other states in

the region. Hence, the issue of Australia asserting itself in a manner akin to that of a great power in contemporary South East Asia does not arise. Australia faces an interesting challenge in South East Asia where it has yet to be fully accepted as part of the region; more so as many of Australia's primary strategic interests lie within the Southeast Asian region. The South East Asian region has been identified, at various times, as the greatest potential threat to security, as well as vital in terms of economic opportunity and regional stability, to Australia.[21] Moreover, the ability of the South East Asian states to withstand attempts at coercion by a middle power like Australia is coupled with the relative lack of regional multilateral institutional arrangements in which Australia could play an influential role. This chapter investigates the strategies adopted by Australia as a middle power in order to overcome the obstacles in the way of a more influential role for itself within the South East Asian region. It argues that even though Australia's capacity for influence in this region has been limited by various factors, it has been able to overcome these difficulties by consistent and persistent efforts to initiate and facilitate regional multilateral processes. Therefore, by successfully fostering 'a habit of consultation and dialogue' within the South East Asian region, Australia established a regional environment that enhanced its own capacity to defend its interests within the region.

The fourth and last of the regions examined (chapter 7) is the Indian Ocean region. The geographic parameters of the Indian Ocean are clear. However, the community of interests or the sense of identity that distinguishes a group of states that share a common geographical region are as yet ill defined. Thus, while the Indian Ocean region might be defined in terms of geography, it has yet to develop a sense of regionalism to qualify as a region in terms of a political community. As a middle

[21] Gareth Evans & Bruce Grant, Australia's foreign relations in the world of the 1990s, Carlton, Melbourne University Press, 1991.

power situated at the rim of the Indian Ocean, Australia has an inchoate interest in the developments of this region. In contrast to the other regions, multilateral institutional arrangements, or even plans for such arrangements, in the Indian Ocean region have remained at an embryonic stage. Neorealist considerations, arguably, find their strongest expression in this region. The deep enmity between India and Pakistan suggests that considerations of relative gains would be vehemently stressed, and this represents a significant impediment to the development of any significant regional arrangement. The issue, however, remains whether regional arrangements, or efforts towards initiating such arrangements, would serve Australian interests. The test for Neorealist assumptions is whether the overriding concern for relative gains represented an insurmountable obstacle to the establishment of regional arrangements in the Indian Ocean 'region'. Although the answers to such issues can only be validated by time and experience, it shall be argued that Australia, as a middle power, has an interest in promoting regional institutions within the Indian Ocean, and possesses the capacity to do so.

In conclusion, this thesis argues that participation in multilateral institutional arrangements enhances the capacity of middle powers, like Australia, to assume a leadership role and to influence developments within their region. It recognises the fact that the determination of what represents national interest may vary from time to time and from leader to leader. However, it is argued that the channels and instruments through which these fluctuating expressions of national interests are defended tend to remain fairly constant. Thus, the 'medium' through which Australian influence is expressed, such as the use of foreign aid, technical assistance, diplomatic ties, or other means, tends to remain fairly constant, even though the 'message' they convey might vary from time to time. As such, it is possible to

evaluate the extent of Australia's influence as a middle power in each of the regions discussed, by examination of the means through which Australia articulated its interest as a state. It is argued that the pursuit of, and participation in, regional multilateral institutional arrangements tends to offer a middle power, like Australia, significant opportunities to influence regional developments in a fashion that make it a more effective actor in international relations. Although Australia's capacity for Realist expressions of coercive power varied in each of the regions surveyed, it shall be demonstrated that Australia's capacity for leadership in regional multilateral institutional arrangements has consistently presented it with favourable opportunities to assume an influential role in regional affairs.

CHAPTER 1

> "There is another side to the problem. The community of nations consists of small and near-great Powers as well as the Big Three or the Big Four. The second part of the problem of world organization is to ensure that these leading Powers will pay due regard to the old but still cherished doctrine of equality of States. They should allow fair representation to smaller Powers on any world organization, and so gain their confidence and support. No sovereign State, however, will wish to think that its destiny has been handed over to another Power, however great. Nor does history at all support the view that wisdom is confined to the strongest nations or that knowledge is found only at the centre of power. Therefore, a successful world organization requires an enthusiastic contribution from smaller Powers both in counsel and in material support. It must be remembered that a so-called small Power may in certain areas and in special circumstances possess great, if not decisive influence." – H.V. Evatt[1]

Introduction

Australia is often described as a 'middle power' in world affairs. However, this raises questions about being 'middle' of what, and what it means to be a 'power' in world affairs. The appellation of middle power carries with it certain assumptions about our understanding of Australia's place in international affairs.

A survey of some of the literature on international relations suggests that there are three premises made when we speak of a 'middle power'.[2] The first premise is the

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[1] H.V. Evatt, Foreign Policy of Australia: Speeches, W. MacMahon Ball (ed.), Sydney, Angus & Robertson Ltd, 1945. p212.

[2] More of this literature will be developed later in this chapter, but some of the more useful for developing these premises were: Martin Wight, Power Politics, Hedley Bull & Carsten Holbraad

existence of a state system. Without the premise of a general state system, there would be no frame of reference to discuss the concept of states and their relationship with one another. Therefore, a state system comprising states as discrete actors that engage one another in a variety of relationships is implicit in the reference to a 'middle power'. The second premise is the relevance of power as the determinant upon which relationships between and among states in the state system are predicated. If the reference to middle 'powers' is to be useful, then the ability of at least some states to defend interests beyond their territorial boundaries through the use of power, in their interaction with other states, must be presumed. The third premise holds that 'power' can be measured, and that states possess physical attributes and resources that may be translated into varying degrees of power. Therefore, it is possible to situate states broadly within a hierarchy, as well as define the states situated in the median of this spectrum of powers as 'middle' powers, based on their capacity to defend their national interests and influence in international relations.

While it will be shown that the above premises have some validity, it will also be argued that power is not the sole determinant upon which all relationships between states are based. It will be demonstrated that multilateral institutional arrangements also influence the order of international relations and that the former continues to grow in significance. The ability of a state to defend its interests effectively through multilateral institutional arrangements must also be taken into account if we are to fully appreciate the role of a state (or its potential) in international relations. It is

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(eds.), London, Leicester University Press, 1995. Carsten Holbraad, Middle Powers In International Politics, London, Macmillan, 1984. G.R. Berridge, International Politics: States, Power & Conflict Since 1945, New York, Prentice Hall, 1997. pp9-21. Charles W. Kegley, Jr. & Gregory A. Raymond, A Multipolar Peace? Great Power Politics in the Twenty-First Century, New York, St Martin's Press, 1994.

argued that the presence of multilateral institutional arrangements mitigates the role of power and represents an additional medium for influence in the state system.

This chapter begins by tracing briefly the development of the modern state system, and explores the premise that sovereign states are equal to one another. It demonstrates that the premise of equality within the state system is a fiction and that states are differentiated in terms of power. Concepts of power in the study of international relations tend to be derived from theories based on Realism.[3] These theories provide a useful guide towards understanding the role of power in international relations by illustrating how power can define the capacity of a state to defend its interests, and how states are differentiated in terms of power, within the state system. Notwithstanding minor variations, these Realist theories of international relations inevitably portray a state system that is structured on the basis of power, and where power can only be constrained by greater power. However, it is argued that over the years of debate about the nature of the state system, considerable evidence emerged to suggest that the naked and unbridled exercise of state power in international relations was not as common as realists proposed. It is argued that this development implied that an ever growing range of state activity in international relations is being regulated, and/or guided, by arrangements that might affect the interests of states, as well as inhibit the arbitrary use of power. Thus, the relevance of traditional Realist assumptions has been subjected to doubt, even by its would-be supporters. At the forefront of the effort to revise old orthodoxies are such new perspectives as "Neorealism" and "Neoliberalism" advanced by scholars attempting

[3] Hobbes and Machiavelli produced two of the seminal works upon which the concept of realism was based. Thomas Hobbes, Leviathan, (ed. & intro. by J.C.A. Gaskin), Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1996. Niccolo Machiavelli, The Prince, (trans. & intro. by George Bull), London, Penguin, 1995. However, the modern exposition of the theory of realism are arguably most often associated with Carr and Morgenthau. Edward Hallett Carr, The twenty years' crisis, 1919-1939 : an introduction to the

to address what appeared to be an increasingly prominent role played by multilateral institutional arrangements in the state system.[4] These theories attempt to reconcile the role of power with the existence and growing significance of multilateral institutional arrangements in the state system, and to demonstrate that the two are not mutually exclusive and must both be studied to fully appreciate the role of the state in international relations.

This chapter reinforces the view that, while states are accepted by one another as juridical equals, they may also be differentiated usefully from one another in terms of the physical attributes and resources that they possess. States can translate the attributes/resources that they possess into power (which includes the capacity to wield coercive force) over other states in international relations. This in turn suggests that some states have a greater capacity to get their own way in international relations than others because of their superior power. However, it is demonstrated that the ability to assert coercive force is not the only, or even the primary means, by which developments in contemporary international relations are determined. Multilateral institutional arrangements, have become an increasingly common feature of the state system, and play an important role in international relations. It shall be shown that multilateral institutional arrangements serve both to regulate the actions of states, as well as provide a medium through which states can defend their interests in the state system.

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study of international relations, London, Macmillan and Co., 1939. Hans J. Morgenthau, Politics Among Nations: The Struggle for Power and Peace (fifth Edition), New York, Knopf, 1985.

[4] For an articulation of Neorealist and Neoliberalist theories, see Kenneth N. Waltz, Theory of International Politics, Reading, Massachusetts, Addison-Wesley Pub. Co., 1979. & Robert, O. Keohane, After Hegemony: Cooperation and Discord in the World Political Economy, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1984. respectively.

The State System

Early polities were often defined either by ethnicity or by religion. While there were arguably a few exceptions, most of these polities would not have perceived themselves as autonomous sovereign states with clearly defined territorial boundaries. Instead, these early polities often saw themselves as divided parts of the whole. Ethnicity, defined by membership in a tribe or by a common culture, often provided a frame of reference for these early polities. Indigenous American governments,

> "... in particular - the Iroquois Confederacy or the Haudenosaunee, comprised of five (later six Indian nations) and the All Indian Pueblo Council, comprised of all the Pueblos - are centuries - old ..."[5]

Similarly, the Chinese saw themselves as one people united by culture. The rulers of the warring states of China declared themselves 'Emperors' of all China, and saw themselves as rulers of a temporarily divided nation rather than as leaders of politically autonomous sovereign units, even though the division often lasted centuries.[6] Similarly, sultans of autonomous Islamic polities would see themselves as part of a wider Islamic polity, and subject to the dictates of their religion.[7]

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[5] Mary B. Davis, Native Americans in the Twentieth Century, An Encyclopedia, New York, Garland Publishing, Inc, 1994. p651.

[6] For a more detailed analysis of the theme of centralism and the cycle between Imperial rule and diffused polities in China, see Dun J. Li, The Ageless Chinese: A History, second edition, New York, Charles Scribner's Sons, 1971. Edwin O. Reischauer & John K. Fairbank, East Asia: The Great Tradition, Boston, Houghton Mifflin Company, 1960. Theodore De Bary, Sources of Chinese Tradition, New York, Columbia University Press, 1960.

[7] Sami Zubaida, Islam, the People and the State: Political Ideas and Movements In The Middle East, London, I.B. Tauris & Co. Ltd., 1989. pp124-134. Seyom Brown, New Forces, Old Forces, and the Future of World Politics, Post-Cold War Edition, Harper Collins, 1995. pp41-43.

Another significant theme that coloured the relationship of early polities was the notion of imperial rule, based on the assumption that there was only one real sovereign "whose realm is universal".[8]

> "If in practice some peoples were outside imperial political control, this was a wrong to be righted, since all owed allegiance to the universal lord."[9]

Thus, when a British diplomatic mission sought to establish ties with China in the late 18th century, they were regarded (as others before them) as supplicants from a vassal state.[10] Similarly, the Roman Emperor was declared *dominus mundi*, 'lord of all the world'.[11] Thus, the issue of 'international' relations was largely based on whether a polity belonged within 'civilisation' and thus subject to the authority (at least nominally) of the Emperor, or lay outside the embrace of 'civilisation'.[12] However, the divide in 'international relations' was usually not centred on the issue of imperial authority, but on ethnicity and/or religion. Ethnicity and religion often coincided with the notion of imperial authority to establish the mindset that guided the relationship between polities in the pre-modern era. The Chinese perspective of foreign relations was, for much of its history, premised on the fact that a person was either 'Chinese' or 'Barbarian'.[13] Likewise, religion provided another divide for 'international relations' wherein the world was perceived in terms of the 'faithful' and 'infidels' (or heathens or pagans).

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[8] Peter J. Taylor, 'The Modern Multiplicity of States', in Globalization; Theory and Practice, Eleonore Kofman & Gillian Youngs (eds.), London, Pinter, 1996. p101.
[9] Peter J. Taylor, 'The Modern Multiplicity of States'. p101.
[10] This is an example of an initial encounter between conflicting paradigms. The clash of civilisations proved to be irreconcilable and inevitably led to war. For an account of the arrival of British in China and the subsequent war, see Immanuel C.Y. Hsu, The Rise of Modern China, (fifth edition), New York, Oxford University Press, 1995. pp130-134 & 154-193.
[11] Peter J. Taylor, 'The Modern Multiplicity of States'. p101.
[12] William Pfaff, The Wrath of Nations: Civilization and the Furies of Nationalism, New York, Touchstone, 1993. p17.
[13] Yen-Ping Hao & Erh-Min Wang, 'Changing Chinese Views of Western Relations, 1840-95', in The Cambridge History of China, Volume 11, Late Ching 1800-1911, Part 2, John K. Fairbank & Kwang-Ching Liu (eds.), Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1980. pp142-145.

> "... the notion of a territorial state with individualised citizenship, secular law and principles of sovereignty, is alien to the 'Muslim mind'. It is contrary to the political models of Islamic history ... [where] the all-inclusive Islamic *umma*, which knows no territorial 'national' boundaries, but operates with the concept of *dar-ul-islam* (the house of Islam), which distinguishes the domains of Islam from those of the infidels."[14]

A similar divide was articulated by St Augustine, who declared that:

> "And thus it has come to pass, that though there are many and great nations all over the earth, whose rites and customs, speech, arms and dress are distinguished by marked differences, yet there are no more than two kinds of human society, which we may justly call two cities, according to the language of our Scriptures. The one consists of those who wish to live after the flesh, the other of those who wish to live after the spirit."[15]

Thus, 'international relations' for these early polities was based on a paradigm substantially different from the modern state system. While violence remained common, such polities were usually guided by the dictates of their religion or tribal custom (culture) in their relations with the other polities that shared their paradigm. Only when polities from two different paradigms encountered each other, as when the Christian Europe confronted the Islamic 'world', or when the Europeans discovered the 'New World', was power the paramount factor in the violent resolution of conflict. Therefore, in the case of medieval Europe, wars that were declared against fellow Christian rulers must be seen as 'just', whereas wars against heathens were, by definition, 'just wars'.[16] This observation was again reiterated by

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[14] Sami Zubaida, Islam, the People and the State: Political Ideas and Movements In The Middle East. p130.
[15] St Augustine, 'City of God', in Princeton Readings In Political Thought: Essential Texts Since Plato, Mitchell Cohen & Nicole Fermon (eds.), Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1996. p135.
[16] J.M. Wallace-Hadrill, The Barbarian West 400-1000, Oxford, Basil Blackwell, 1985. p15.

Francois Guizot who observed that in the struggle between 'Christianity and Mahommedanism', the "moral unity of [European] nations was shown".[17]

It was in Europe that the concept of a modern state, and consequently, a modern state system developed. The evolution of the state system in Europe went through several phases. It began with the division of Europe into various tribes, which had settled and laid claim to territory.[18] The expansion of the Roman Empire saw the establishment of a universal political authority, which the subsequent spread of Christianity in Europe entrenched. With Constantine's 'Edict of Milan' which 'legalised' Christianity, and later the endorsement of Christianity by Emperor Theodosius as the sole religion of the Roman Empire,[19] religion came to provide a universal paradigm, which endured even after the fall of Rome, under which the political units of Europe were organised.[20]

The political units of 'pre-modern' Europe did not see themselves as sovereign in their own right, but as part of a greater polity that descended from, and inherited the authority of, the Holy Roman Empire.[21]

> "The innumerable kingdoms, fiefs and cities which composed medieval Christendom did not assert (perhaps they were too poorly organized to assert) their political independence in the absolute terms of the modern state."[22]

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[17] Francois Guizot, The History of Civilization in Europe, (trans. William Hazlitt, Intro. & (ed.) By Larry Siedentop), London, Penguin, 1997. p141.
[18] Perry Anderson, Passages from Antiquity to Feudalism, London, Verso, 1996. pp113-118. David Nicholas, The Evolution of the Medieval World: Society, Government and Thought in Europe, 312-1500, London, Longman, 1992. pp50-81.
[19] David Nicholas, The Evolution of the Medieval World: Society, Government and Thought in Europe, 312-1500. p30
[20] R. Allen Brown, The Origins of Modern Europe: The Medieval Heritage of Western Civilization, Woodbridge, The Boydell Press, 1972.
[21] Norman Davis, Europe: A History, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1996. p298 & p302.
[22] Martin Wight, Power Politics. pp23-24.

Territorial control was significant, but not the defining source of political authority. Authority, as opposed to power, could only be exercised under the sanction of the Church,

> "No renaissance ruler believed either that his claims to 'sovereign' status as 'emperor within his own kingdom' implied the abrogation of his duties as a prince of Christendom or that the political independence of his realms ruptured the various practices which mediaeval Christendom had adumbrated for the government of its affairs in both peace and war."[23]

Thus, all rights and obligations with respect to political power, including not only those pertaining to relations between ruler and ruled, but also that which applied to relations between rulers, were enumerated by the paradigm established by Christianity in Europe. More important, this paradigm was accepted by the polities of pre-modern Europe as legitimate and binding. This meant that in theory, polities in dispute with one another were subject to the authority of the Church.[24] In practice, medieval society in Europe submitted to the authority of the Church, or at the very least, was swayed by the counsel of the Church in most matters.[25] Thus,

> "modern history as contrasted with medieval history is a history of powers, forces, dynasties and ideas ... Medieval wars are, as a rule, wars of rights; they are seldom wars of un-provoked, never wars of absolute unjustifiable aggression; they are not wars of idea or liberation, or of glory, or of nationality, or of propagandism."[26]

This paradigm persisted until divisions within the Catholic Church, and resentment against the interference by the Church in the secular affairs of princes, undermined

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[23] Maurice Keens-Soper, 'The Practice of a States-System' in The Reason of States: A Study in International Political Theory, Micheal Donelan (ed.), London, George Allen & Unwin, 1978. p26.
[24] Thomas F.X. Noble, 'The Papacy In The Eighth and Ninth Centuries', in The New Cambridge Medieval History II c700-c900, Rosamund Mckitterick (ed.), Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1995. pp563-586.
[25] Julia M.H. Smith, 'Religion and Lay Society', in The New Cambridge Medieval History II c700-c900, Rosamund Mckitterick (ed.), Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1995. pp654-678.
[26] W. Stubbs, Seventeen Lectures on the Study of Medieval and Modern History, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1886. p209 & p217. Cited in Martin Wight, Power Politics, p26.

the all-encompassing embrace of universal Christendom.[27] With the religious wars in Europe came the eventual separation of temporal political power from religion, and religion ceased to be the ultimate source of political legitimacy or a prescriptive guide for the exercise of political power. Instead, ultimate authority within specified territorial boundaries was vested in the sovereign of that land. Thus, the modern state system evolved with the secular state in Europe.

The features of modern statehood were first established by the Peace of Westphalia. The Peace of Westphalia referred to the European settlements of 1648, which brought an end to the religious wars following the Reformation and the Counter-Reformation, including the Eighty Years' War between Spain and the Dutch, and the German phase of the Thirty Years' War.[28]

> "The peace of Westphalia was important in establishing a territorial base-line which was continually referred to in treaties down to 1789. It also established certain principles which influenced international relations throughout the same period. ... The principle was now accepted that each state could have its own religion ... At the same time, while states were still to strive for hegemony, there was also general acceptance that all states were independent and theoretically equal ...".[29]

The organising theme of European polities was no longer based on membership of a universal religion. With the principle of *cuius regio, eius religio* (he who governs the territory decides its religion), there was no longer a universal religion to sustain even the myth of political unity under one Church in Europe. Nor did religion continue to be the primary source of legitimacy for political power. Instead, scholars like Bodin, Locke and Rousseau introduced and developed secular concepts of sovereignty to

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[27] V.H.H. Green, Renaissance and Reformation: A Survey Of European History Between 1450 and 1660, London, Edward Arnold, 1964. pp18-28.
[28] Geoffrey Parker (ed.), The Thirty Years' War (second edition), London, Routledge, 1984.
[29] Derek McKay, H.M. Scott, The Rise of the Great Powers: 1648-1815, London, Longman, 1983. p6.

invest power in the state as the ultimate source of authority.[30] Thus, political power came to be based on the control of, and loyalty from people, within clearly defined territorial boundaries.[31] Derived from the Latin term *superanus* and the French term *souveraineté*, the concept of sovereignty was intended to convey the fact that supreme political power now resided in the sovereign, who was not answerable to any other.[32] Consequently, the state system that emerged was based on two conditions:

> "First, there are independent political units acknowledging no political superior, and claiming to be 'sovereign'; and secondly, there are continuous and organized relations between them."[33]

With the Peace of Westphalia, the state system (the whole) became "nothing but the sum of its parts". [34] Each state represented a discrete polity, equal to each other in the sense that they were all sovereign states because *majestas est summa in cives ac subditos legibusque soluta potestas* (the sovereign that makes the laws can not be bound by them). Sovereign states answered only to international arrangements to which they have voluntarily submitted.

The principle of sovereign and equal states was not universally applied outside Europe until after the Second World War. Instead, the age of European colonisation saw the subjugation of non-European states as client states by the powers of Europe. James Mayall explained:

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[30] Jean Bodin, Six Books of a Commonweale, (trans. by K.D. McRae) Cambridge: Massachusetts, Harvard University Press, 1962. John Locke, Two Treatises of government, (intro. by Peter Laslett), New York, New American Library, 1965. Jean-Jacque Rousseau, The Social Contract, (trans. & intro. by Maurice Cranston), Baltimore, Penguin Books, 1968.

[31] The 'people' were first 'subjects', and later 'citizens' – corresponding with the development of a concept of sovereignty that regarded sovereignty as being ordained by God, to the concept of popular sovereignty. See Ernest Barker, Social contract: Essays by Locke, Hume and Rousseau, London, Oxford University Press, 1971.

[32] Alan James, Sovereign Statehood: The Basis Of International Society, London, Allen & Unwin, 1986. chapters 1 & 2.

[33] Martin Wight, Power Politics. p23.

> "[The Europeans were able to] defend the double standard by invoking what one might call 'the barbarian option': the rule which applied in relations between 'civilised' peoples did not automatically apply beyond the civilised world."[35]

Thus, the relationship between the European powers and their client states were not based on sovereign equality. It was not until the unsuccessful attempts by Germany and Japan to establish 'universal empires' in the Second World War, that the 'double standard' was seriously challenged. The Atlantic Charter, the Moscow Declaration, the Dumbarton Oaks proposal had all acknowledged the principle of sovereign equality, and pledged to respect the belief "that small nations and great, though unequal in power, must be equal in rights."[36] The "double standard" was eroded when decolonialisation after World War Two saw many new states "invested with a legal status and a legal equality with all other states".[37]

The newly formed United Nations reiterated the basic principles of a general state system comprising equal and independent sovereign states. This was reflected in the Charter of the United Nations, which reinforced respect for "the accepted international precept for national sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence,"[38] and states in Article 2 of its Charter that:

> 1. The Organization is based on the principle of the sovereign equality of all its Members.
> ...
> 3. All Members shall settle their international disputes by peaceful means in such a manner that international peace and security, and justice, are not endangered.

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[34] Martin Wight, Power Politics. p26.
[35] James Mayall, 'International Society and International Theory', in The Reason of States: A Study in International Political Theory, Micheal Donelan (ed.), London, George Allen & Unwin, 1978. p127.
[36] MacMahon Ball, 'Introduction', in H.V. Evatt, Foreign Policy of Australia: Speeches, Sydney, Angus & Robertson Ltd, 1945. pviii.
[37] Bruce Russett and Harvey Starr, World Politics: The Menu for Choice, New York, W.H. Freeman and Company, 1989. p58.
[38] Commonwealth Secretariat, Vulnerability: Small States in the Global Society, Marlborough House, London, 1985. p4.

> 4. All Members shall refrain in their international relations from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any state, or in any other manner inconsistent with the Purposes of the United Nations.[39]

Therefore, with the end of the colonial era and the foundation of the United Nations, international relations premised on the interaction of equal and sovereign states within a global state system began to form the theoretical basis upon which modern theories of international relations were constructed.[40]

The Concept Of Power

The concept of power touches on assumptions of equality in the state system, and is one of the perennial themes in the debate on the nature of international relations.[41] While many states formally acknowledge the principle of sovereign equality, respect for equality and sovereignty in international relations is frequently criticised, and often with good cause, as being more theoretical than real.[42] In particular, some scholars point to structures of dependence between 'core' states and 'peripheral' states, and other manifestations of inequality in international relations, as evidence of neo-colonialism and of the myth of equality among sovereign states.[43] Therefore,

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[39] Charter of the United Nations, signed at the United Nations Conference on International Organization, San Francisco, June 26, 1945.

[40] For two other brief and easily accessible discussions on the development of the state system, see Roger D. Spegele, Political Realism in International Theory, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1996. pp102-126. Or Seyom Brown, New Forces, Old Forces, and the Future of World Politics. pp19-45.

[41] Edward Hallett Carr, The twenty years' crisis, 1919-1939 : an introduction to the study of international relations. Hans J. Morgenthau, Politics Among Nations: The Struggle for Power and Peace (fifth Edition). Harold Sprout & Margaret Sprout, Foundations of International Politics, Princeton, D. Van Nostrand Company, 1962.

[42] Barrie Axford, The Global System: Economics,Politics and Culture, Cambridge, Polity Press, 1996. pp33-62.

[43] For a discussion on the evidence of structural inequality in the general state system, see Immanuel Wallerstein, The Modern World System. Volume I, New York, Academic Press, 1974. Andre Gunder Frank, Capitalism and Underdevelopment in Latin America, New York, Monthly Review Press, 1969.

there appears to be a serious disjunction between the *de facto* and the *de jure* status of states within the state system.

The disparity between the nominal equality of states and the 'reality' of their unequal status is based on the fact that states can be differentiated in terms of their capacity to exercise power in defence of their interests. When states achieve sovereignty, they vest ultimate constitutional authority in themselves. However, relations between sovereign states are difficult to avoid and such inter-State relations are often predicated on the concept of power. Seyom Brown explains:

> "Under the assumption that each nation-state is a self-governing unit, relations among them would seem to only be a marginal feature of the system. But even prior to the contemporary age of 'interdependence', international relations have been quite prominent among various groups of countries. Why? One basic reason is that many countries are far from self-sufficient in certain goods required or desired by their peoples, including, in some cases, physical security and public order, and therefore will attempt to acquire these goods from other countries, sometimes by commerce, sometimes by conquest. Another reason is that often countries commonly use the same resource areas (oceans, rivers, the atmosphere, outer space), and the people of one country using a particular resource get in the way of or affect the condition of the people of another country. The determination of who gets what, when, where, and how in such contested areas necessitates international negotiation or fighting."[44]

The relevance of power as a concept in international relations rests upon the fact that states interacted with one another on terms of sovereign equality in a system where the absence of a constitutional authority is conspicuous. Thus, the pattern of the relationship between states can only be established by reference to normative practice or voluntarily contractual arrangements or coercion. Realist theories of international relations argue that "the determination of who gets what, when, where, and how" in international relations usually involve negotiation or fighting, but that

the chance for success of a state in defending its interests, regardless of the means employed, is based primarily on its power.[45]

Realists argue that power is the yardstick that differentiated states in the state system from one another. Disparity in terms of land, wealth, population, and other resources set sovereign states apart from one another. This meant that some states possessed a greater range of capabilities and are better able to defend their interests in international relations than other states less fortunately endowed. These capabilities ranged from the capacity to subjugate other states, to the stipulation of the terms under which trade is conducted, to the imposition of international regimes to legitimise, or to defend a desired pattern of behaviour in international relations. Therefore, the Realist perspective of international relations is one where powerful states may alter or impose arrangements within the state system to suit their interests, whereas weaker states had to conform to the resulting structures to the best of their ability.[46] Thus, Russett and Starr argue that:

> "By the principles of sovereignty and international law all states are juridically equal - but in practice some are more equal than others."[47]

A distinction is made between the concept of states as 'sovereign' and the concept of states as 'powers'. The concept of 'sovereign states' simply referred to the legitimacy and monopoly of power within defined territorial boundaries. In contrast, the notion of 'powers' explored the probability that an actor within the state system will be in a

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[44] Seyom Brown, New Forces, Old Forces, and the Future of World Politics, Post Cold War Edition. pp11-12.
[45] Hans J. Morgenthau, Politics Among Nations: The Struggle for Power and Peace (fifth Edition).
[46] George Couffignal, 'The Inter-American System after the Cold War', in Power and Purpose after the Cold War, Zaki Laidi (ed.), Oxford, Berg, 1994, pp169-171.
[47] Bruce Russett and Harvey Starr, World Politics: The Menu for Choice. p58.

position to carry out its will, beyond the territorial limits of its sovereign jurisdiction, "despite resistance, regardless of the basis on which the probability rests."[48]

The varying capacity of states to affect relationships and/or proceedings within the state system led to the inference that it was possible to identify a structure within the state system that was defined by power. Martin Wight was one author who described a state system based on a hierarchical structure of states that ranged from minor powers to great powers.[49] According to Wight, small powers had limited or no impact on the system beyond their ability to exercise sovereignty within their own territorial boundaries, whereas the influence of great powers was manifested throughout the entire state system. For Wight and other Realists, power was synonymous with the capacity of 'powers' to defend their interests in international relations. Wight argues that:

> "The power that makes a 'power' is composed of many elements. Its basic components are size of population, strategic position and geographic extent, and economic resources and industrial production. To these must be added less tangible elements like administrative and financial efficiency, education and technological skill, and above all moral cohesion."[50]

However, even though they cited various expressions of power, including the power to shape opinion or economic power, Wight and other Realist-inclined authors tended to take the view that *Force* was the *ultima ratio* of power and that all other factors were subsumed by this fact.[51]

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[48] Max Weber, Economy and Society: An Outline of Interpretative Sociology, Guenther Roth & Claus Wittich (eds.), New York, Bedminister Press, 1968. p53. Weber was not referring specifically to relations between states. However, Weber's definitive concept of power in social relations is also applicable to the study of power in international relations, and paraphrased above.
[49] Martin Wight, Power Politics.
[50] Martin Wight, Power Politics. p26.
[51] Zaki Laidi, 'Power and Purpose in the International system', in Power and Purpose after the Cold War, Zaki Laidi (ed.), Oxford, Berg, 1994. pp7-8.

For Realists, the power of a state, and its ability to influence arrangements in the inter-state system, is measured by its physical capacity to wage war.[52] The population of a state was significant for the potential size of the armies that it could field. Social conditions were examined in terms of their capacity to affect the cohesiveness, morale, and/or other factors governing an army's ability to fight. Economic potential was judged in the light of a state's capacity to fund an army. The level of technology in a country was measured in terms of the sort of armaments that it could potentially wield. Diplomacy was simply an instrument to organise military alliances, and/or the means to shape the international structure, based on a pecking order, established by force of arms. Wight, himself clearly regarded military capabilities as the primary basis of power, and notes that:

> "... the phrase 'power politics' ... is a translation from the German word *Machtpolitik*, which means the politics of force - the conduct of international relations by force or the threat of force, without considerations of right and justice."[53]

Wight elaborated on the primacy of power in international relations with the analogy that:

> "... just as in domestic politics influence is not government, so in international politics influence is not power. It is concrete power in the end that settles great international issues."[54]

Such assertions were typical of the 'traditional' view of international relations, and interpretations of international relations by Carr, Morgenthau, and Kennedy have also been based on similar perspectives. Carr and Kennedy examined the relationship between the states of Europe. In particular, they charted the use of power, by the

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[52] Harold Sprout & Margaret Sprout, Foundations of International Politics. John Stoessinger, The Might of Nations 3rd edition, New York, Random House, 1969. John Garnett, Contemporary Strategy, London, Croom Helm, 1975.
[53] Martin Wight, Power Politics. p29.
[54] Martin Wight, Power Politics. p26.

great powers of Europe, to influence the pattern of international relations and thereby affect the fate of nations within the state system.[55] Morgenthau looked at the impact of power on international relations during the Cold War era, and the resultant structure that emerged from bi-polar politics and the confrontation between the super powers.[56] Power-oriented perspectives of 'international' relations have been around even before the concept of the modern state originated with the peace of Westphalia.[57] These studies all shared a view that the world is organised according to the interplay of power wielded by sovereign states in international relations, and portray a state system where states contended with one another over mastery (but not necessarily conquest) of that state system.

The power-based perspectives of international relations also explore the notion of a hierarchy of states that can be established on the basis of a range of criteria. A popular theme is the construction of quantitative measures to assist in the measurement and comparison of state power. Writers such as Galtung or Kennedy have surveyed and highlighted the power base of states in terms of population, gross national product, armed forces, and other 'tools of coercion', and built conceptual

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[55] Edward Hallett Carr, The twenty years' crisis, 1919-1939 : an introduction to the study of international relations. Paul Kennedy, The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers: Economic Change and Military Conflict Since 1500 to 2000, London, Fortuna Press, 1989.

[56] Hans J. Morgenthau, Politics Among Nations: The Struggle for Power and Peace (fifth edition). Wight's concept of a 'dominant power' might be roughly analogous to the concept of a 'super power'. A 'super power' or 'dominant power' is "one that might measure strength against all its rivals combined". Martin Wight, Power Politics. p34. The term 'super power' in this paper is used specifically to refer to the United States and the Soviet Union during the Cold War. It is intended as a term of convenience, as opposed to an analytic concept, simply because much of the literature refers to these two states as 'super powers'. In this thesis, however, where the focus is on middle powers, the distinction that separates super powers or dominant powers from great powers is not significant. Thus, for the purposes of this thesis, dominant or super powers shall be treated as being similar to great powers – that is, as powers possessing the capacity and inclination to defend system-wide interests.

[57] Indeed, such power-oriented perspectives of dealings between polities have been recorded and debated since Thucydides, History of the Peloponnesian War, and the writings of Kautilya. For a critique of Thucydides, see Paul A. Rahe, 'Thucydides' Critique of Realpolitik', in Roots of Realism, Benjamin Frankel (ed.), London, Fran Cass 1996. Or Laurie M. Johnson Bagby, 'Thucydidean Realism: Between Athens and Melos', in Roots of Realism, Benjamin Frankel (ed.), London, Fran Cass 1996. For a sample of Kautilya's writings, see Theodore de Bary, Sources of Indian Tradition, Volume One: From the Beginning to 1800, revised and edited by Ainslie T. Embree, New York, Columbia University Press, 1988. pp247-249.

models for a hierarchy of states based on the possession of a selection of physical attributes.[58] Kegley and Raymond have also provided a useful schedule to compare and contrast some of the conceptual models that have been developed.

Contending Views of the Elements of National Power

Crabb (1965: 7)	**Hartmann** (1983: 41-67)	**Kulski** (1968: 98-101)	**Lerche & Said** (1963: 59)	**Morgenthau** (1985: 127-183)
Geography	Geographic element	Size, location	Geographic position	Geography
Economic resources	Economic element	Economic resources & raw materials	Resource endowment	National Resources
Technological resources		Technological resources	Educational & technical level	
Military Forces	Military element	Military potential	Military power	Military preparedness
Population	Demographic element	Population characteristics	Population & manpower	Population
National Character	Historical, psychological, sociological element			National character
			National morale	National morale
	Organizational administrative element	Quality of national leaders & elites	Political economic & social structure	Quality of government
Ideology				
		Industrial Capacity	Industrial & agricultural productive capacity	Industrial capability
			International strategic position	
				Quality of diplomacy
		Land, maritime, and air transportation capacity		

[58] Johan Galtung, On the Way to Superpower Status: India and the EC Compared, Indian Ocean Centre For Peace Studies, Occasional Paper No 2, 1991. Paul Kennedy, The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers: Economic Change and Military Conflict from 1500 to 2000.

Organski (1968: 124)	**Palmer & Perkins** (1957: 35-91)	**Stoessinger** (1969: 15-27)	**U.S. Army** (1960: 2)	**Van Dyke** (1966: 199-200)
Geography	Geography	Geography	Geographic component	Geographic base
Resources	Natural resources	Natural resources	Economic component	Economic system
Economic development	Technology	Economic & industrial development		Scientific & inventive potentialities
			Military component	Armed establishment
Population	Population	Population		Demographic base
		National character	Sociological component	
National morale	Morale	National morale		
Political development	Leadership	Government: national leadership	Political component	Government organization & administration (wisdom of leadership)
	Ideology	Ideology		Ideas
				Productive capacity
				Strategic Position
				Transport & Communications
				Intelligence

Source: Charles W. Kegley, Jr. & Gregory A. Raymond, A Multipolar Peace? Great Power Politics in the Twentieth Century, New York, MacMillan, 1994. pp14-15.

Others like Rosenau created a conceptual framework of the state system based on the degree to which states affected, and were affected by, their external environment.[59] According to Rosenau, great powers would have 'policy outputs' that had a high impact on the state system, but remained resistant to 'inputs' from their external environments. In contrast, small powers had low or no influence on the state system, but were highly susceptible to influence from their external environment.

[59] James N. Rosenau(ed.), Linkage Politics: Essays on the Convergence of National and International Systems, New York, The Free Press, 1969.

		Outputs	
		High	Low
Inputs	High	Egypt	Congo
		Nigeria	Cyprus
	Low	U.S.	Sweden
		U.S.S.R.	Switzerland

Source: James N. Rosenau(ed.), Linkage Politics: Essays on the Convergence of National and International Systems, New York, The Free Press, 1969. p59.

Such perspectives were useful in that they gave expression to an intuitive understanding of international relations. It seemed only logical that large, wealthy and populous states would have a greater ability to determine the arrangements within the state system that affected the fate of other states, in contrast to small, poor and sparsely populated states who would have little or no impact on such arrangements.[60]

The arguments canvassed earlier contend that the theoretical equality of sovereign states in the state system is rarely upheld by practice in international relations. They also demonstrated that states could be usefully differentiated on the basis of power.[61] While differentiation can produce a hierarchy of powers, which can in turn be translated into a guide to the capacity of states to defend their interests in international relations, Ian Clark cautioned that:

> "The description of the state system as hierarchical should not be understood in too precise a sense. Waltz has used the term to define a structural ordering principle of a political system and, in this sense, it is to be contrasted with an anarchic order. The present work employs the term in the less specialised sense of meaning a social arrangement characterized by stratification in which, like the angels, there are orders of power and glory and the society is

[60] MacMahon Ball, 'Introduction', in H.V. Evatt, Foreign Policy of Australia: Speeches. pviii.
[61] Coral Bell, 'The International Environment and Australia's Foreign Policy', in In Pursuit of National Interests: Australian Foreign Policy in the 1990s, F.A. Mediansky & A.C. Palfreeman (eds.), Sydney, Pergamon Press, 1988. pp69-70.

> classified in successively subordinate grades. This hierarchy is commonly assigned in terms of politico-strategic power, yielding the traditional groupings of great powers, medium powers, and small powers."[62]

Likewise, this thesis employs the term 'hierarchy' to describe the structural classification of states according to perceptions of their capacity, based on "politico-strategic power", to defend their interests within the state system.

Constraints On Power Politics

Realists had offered a compelling critique against utopian visions of the state system. However, the Realist argument that national interests might be advanced through the unfettered use of naked power, especially military power, has come under strong challenge because of geopolitical changes. With the change in mood in the post Cold War era, scholars such as Ken Booth and Geoffrey Till write of "New Times for Old Navies" and of "turning warships into lawships", and less 'glamorous' roles for navies.[63] The arguments that the use of force in international relations has become *passé* included arguments by scholars such as Andrew Linklater who argue that:

> "... states no longer regard territorial conquest as central to economic development ... In early modern Europe [and earlier], it is often argued that, violence was endemic partly because the absolutist state assumed that economic growth required conquest and war. False expectations of the economic benefits of territorial expansion compounded the tensions which led to the First World War. The twentieth century has witnessed the rise of the trading

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[62] Ian Clark, The Hierarchy of States: Reform And Resistance In The International Order, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1989. p2.

[63] Ken Booth, 'The Future of Navies in Peacetime: The Influence of Future History on Sea Power' in Naval Power in the Pacific: Towards the Year 2000, Hugh Smith and Anthony Bergin (eds.), Boulder, Lynne Rienner, 1993. pp143-162. Geoffrey Till, 'A Post-Cold War Maritime Strategy for NATO', Naval Forces, Vol.XIII, No.III, 1992. pp8-15.

> state which eschews the use of force for strategies of global commerce and investment."[64]

Similar sentiments were echoed by political leaders like the Malaysian Prime Minister, Mahathir Mohamad who claims:

> "There was a time when wars could be won at what may be termed as a reasonable cost. It no longer is. Even the richest oil nations can be bankrupted by a few days of hurling ballistic missiles at each other. In the end there is so little to show - no new empires, no subject people and no new sources of wealth to plunder. Powerful nations have invaded and conquered only to negotiate ignominious retreats with nothing to show except a long list of casualties. Conquest is a messy business in an age where people matter and where the names will not simply lie down and submit."[65]

In addition to the arguments that the use of force might no longer be as rewarding, the threat of retaliation also limited the use of either military or economic power in the pursuit of state interests by many states.[66] Many contemporary great powers, including the United States, were also restricted in the unbridled expression of their power, particularly military power, by liberal democratic political systems.[67] There was a perception that wars must be fought for moral reasons, as well as by moral means.[68] While some of these sentiments may be dismissed as political rhetoric, there is no denying that the coercive use of force in state sanctioned violence within the state system is generally regarded as undesirable, international cooperation is widely and popularly perceived as very desirable. There appeared to be a growing

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[64] Andrew Linklater, 'Neo-realism in Theory and Practice', in International Relations Theory Today, Ken Booth & Steve Smith (ed.), Cambridge, Polity Press, 1996. pp254-255.
[65] Mahathir Bin Mohamad, Regionalism, Globalism and Spheres of Influence: ASEAN and Challenge of Change into the 21st Century, Singapore, Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 1989. p12.
[66] Seyom Brown, New Forces, Old Forces, and the Future of World Politics, Post Cold-War Edition. p245.
[67] Liberal democracies like the United States are generally considered to be highly accountable to their electorate and must be able to justify the use of force before being able to do so. Peter J. Anderson, The Global Politics of Power, Justice and Death: An Introduction to International Relations, London, Routledge, 1996. pp30-40. For a treatment of linkages between domestic interests and international policy, see James Rosenau, Linkage Politics: Essays on the Convergence of National and International Systems.
[68] Micheal Walzer, Just and Unjust Wars, New York, Basic Books, 1977.

belief in the international community that states ought to abide by a common set of rules, and international regimes are generally perceived to advance this ideal of international cooperation. [69]

International regimes are commonly regarded as being synonymous with international treaties, conventions and agreements. While political scientists have adopted more precise definitions in the study of international regimes, the concept of an international regime has been criticised, notably by Susan Strange, for its ambiguity.[70] Notwithstanding issues of precision in terminology, or the distinction made between legally 'enforceable' (hard law) and legally unenforceable regimes (soft law), there are a few features of international regimes that may be taken as generally accepted.[71]

Regimes possess a structure that generates 'principles, norms, rules, and decision-making procedures'. International regimes may be, and are often defined by the terms of a treaty or agreement between two or more states. However, long-standing practices in international relations may also give rise to international regimes when tradition acquires the status of customary law through time, and become a set of principles defined as 'beliefs of fact, causation, and rectitude' that affect the

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[69] The rhetoric of diplomats and the media certainly promotes this belief even though it is regarded by some as idealistic and/or naive. See Kevin Clements & Robin Ward (eds.), Building International Community, Cooperating for Peace Case Studies, St Leonards: NSW, Allen & Unwin, 1994. Gareth Evans, Cooperating For Peace: The Global Agenda for the 1990s and Beyond, St Leonards: NSW, Allen & Unwin, 1993.

[70] Susan Strange, 'Cave! Hic dragones: a critque of regime analysis', in International Regimes, Steven D. Krasner (ed.), Ithaca, Cornell University Press, 1993. pp337-354.

[71] While it might be argued that the nature of sovereign states is such that they can not be bound by any authority other than their own, states generally acknowledge a commitment to honour contractual arrangements with other states, and hence these arrangements are considered legally enforceable. In contrast to the contractual arrangements that fall under the rubric of international law, states also engage in collective declarations of common purpose and/or declarations of common values. While these declarations are considered useful guides that reflect the intent of states, or prevailing standards by which the actions of states could be measured, they are not generally recognised as a binding obligation by sovereign states, and hence they are not deemed to be legally enforceable.

behaviour of states in a predictable fashion.[72] Krasner proposed that regimes might be regarded:

> "... as sets of implicit or explicit principles, norms, rules, and decision-making procedures around which actors' expectations converge in a given area of international relations".[73]

In this thesis, the more discriminating distinctions associated with the concept of a regime shall be ignored. It is not the purpose here to examine these distinctions in depth. Instead, *the term 'regime' will be held to represent all multilateral and institutionalised arrangements between states.* Thus, within the context of this thesis, the concept of a regime will be deemed to include international organisations, regulatory arrangements and other international arrangements, which establish a pattern in international relations that guide the way states behave or make decisions within the state system.[74]

Historically, power and international regimes play a significant role in international relations.[75] Much of contemporary international maritime law was shaped by great powers who imposed international regimes that suited their interests on other states. *Pax Britannica* saw Britain exercise its military strength, during an era when it was the dominant power, to unilaterally impose a 3 mile limit on the territorial sea, stamp out slavery, secure the right to free passage, and enforce other oceanic regimes on all

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[72] Stephen D. Krasner, 'Structural Causes and Regime Consequences: Regimes as Intervening Variables', in International Regimes, Stephen D. Krasner (ed.), Ithaca, Cornell University Press, 1991. p2.

[73] Stephen D. Krasner, 'Structural Causes and Regime Consequences: Regimes as Intervening Variables'. p2

[74] For the purposes of this thesis, the terms 'regime' and 'multilateral institutional arrangements' are interchangeable. The term 'regime' is used in much of the literature discussed in this chapter, and is employed in this chapter. However, as a matter of personal preference and because it conveys more clearly the intended concept, the term multilateral institutional arrangements would be used for the following chapters.

[75] Mark W. Zacher, Governing Global Networks: International Regimes for Transportation and Communications, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1996.

states in the state system.[76] While many states have accepted these regimes as just or desirable, it remains a fact that they were put in place by a great power acting unilaterally in pursuit of its own interests, and which had the capacity to construct international regimes binding on all others within the state system. The significance of international regimes rests in the fact that they are also deemed to be binding on the states that 'created' them, as well as the fact that such regimes often remained in place even after the state that imposed them had diminished as a power. Hence, Kim Nossal argued that international regimes are important:

> "[B]ecause institutions tend to take on a life of their own, smaller powers understand full well that international organisations can serve to constrain the larger powers, lashing them, as it were to an institutional mast."[77]

The capacity of these and other regimes to constrain the exercise of power by states, introduces another dimension to the issue of 'who gets what, when, where, and how' in international relations.

The role that international regimes can play in constraining the power of states through institutionalised arrangements achieves even greater significance in light of the fact that the contemporary state system is characterised by a proliferation of international regimes, pertaining to all aspects of international relations.[78] International regimes regulate trade, harmonise national laws, give direction to policy, coordinate defence and govern many other issues that affect how states behave. The proliferation and pervasiveness of international regimes within the state

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[76] Mark W. Zacher, Governing Global Networks: International Regimes for Transportation and Communications. p7 & p46.

[77] Kim Richard Nossal, 'Middle Power Diplomacy in the Changing Asia-Pacific Order: Australia and Canada Compared', in Charting the Post-Cold War Order, Richard Leaver & James L. Richardson (eds.), Boulder, Westview Press, 1993. p215.

[78] Herr, R. and E. Chia (1995). The Concept of Regime Overlap: Toward Identification and Assessment. Senior Practitioners Workshop on Overlapping Maritime Regimes, March 1995. Ed. B. W. Davis. Hobart, Tasmania, Antarctic CRC Monograph. 2: 11-26.

system lends weight to the view that the role of multilateral institutional arrangements in international relations, with respect to the determination of 'who gets what, when where, and how', can not be ignored.

The continued and all-encompassing expansion of human activity across national boundaries has been the subject of many studies,[79] and the growth of transboundary activity is a theme consistently found in many of the explanations for the increasing number of international regimes. In particular, functionalist accounts of the role of international regimes have been popular. In the absence of an all-embracing world government, states have adopted various multilateral arrangements to facilitate continuous and organised relations with one another. The evolution of human society and the advance of technology have made the establishment of regimes necessary, both as a means of regulating activity, and a way of affirming established patterns of behaviour that guide the interaction, between states, their governments and their peoples. The need for states to coordinate their actions is reflected in the many transboundary transactions such as trade and commerce between states, or movements of people between states, which require a clear understanding and agreement between the states involved. For example, the simple business of posting a letter to a friend in another country involves a regime.[80]

> "The Universal Postal Convention, adopted in 1874, which specifies the types of correspondence that may be transmitted internationally; prohibits mailing of certain articles and commodities, such as narcotics; provides for the redirection or return of correspondence that cannot be delivered; regulates payments when the mail goes through the territory of several

[79] Robert Z. Lawrence, Regionalism, Multilateralism, and Deeper Integration, Washington, D.C., The Brookings Institution, 1996. James Hawdon, Emerging Organizational Forms: The Proliferation of Regional Intergovernmental Organizations in the Modern World System, Westport, Greenwood Press, 1996. James N. Rosenau & Hylke Tromp (eds.), Interdependence and Conflict in World Politics, Aldershot, Avebury, 1989. Micheal Smith, Richard Little, & Micheal Shackleton, Perspectives on World Politics, London, Croom Helm, 1981.

[80] Mark W. Zacher, Governing Global Networks: International Regimes for Transportation and Communications. pp181-211.

> members; and guarantees freedom of transit throughout the entire union [comprising nearly all independent nations and their territories]."[81]

Regimes served to harmonise regulations among states so as to facilitate business, social or other transactions, and to bring about predictability and order, and instil confidence within the state system, by clarifying the duties and obligations of states with respect to one another.

Arthur Stein describes transboundary issues, which mandate some degree of cooperation and coordination between states, as 'dilemmas of common aversion' and 'dilemmas of common interests'.[82] The phrase 'dilemmas of common interests' reflect the need for states to cooperate in order to achieve commonly desired objectives. In contrast, the phrase 'dilemmas of common aversion' suggest a collective desire to avoid an outcome that is undesirable to all. Both refer to the increasing schedule of issues on the international agenda that can not be resolved unilaterally. There appears to be a growing number of instances where international regimes emerged as responses to transboundary issues that were recognised as global or regional concerns and which required a multilateral response in order to achieve a satisfactory solution.[83] For example, concerns raised by warnings of global warming and of the hole in the ozone layer prompted calls for a multilateral response, and resulted in the Convention on Climate Change.[84] While the failure to establish

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[81] Microsoft Encarta Encyclopaedia CD ROM.

[82] Arthur Stein, 'Coordination and Collaboration: Regimes in an Anarchic World', in Neorealism and Neoliberalism: The Contemporary Debate, David A. Baldwin (ed.), New York, Columbia University Press, 1993. pp29-59.

[83] Andrew Hurrell & Benedict Kingsbury (eds.), The International Politics of the Environment, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1992. Alan Lipietz, Green Hopes: The Future of Political Ecology, translated by Malcolm Slater, Cambridge, Polity Press, 1995. Edith Brown Weiss, Environmental Change and International Law: New Challenges and Dimensions, Tokyo, United Nations University Press, 1992. Seyom Brown, New Forces, Old Forces, and the Future of World Politics. pp187-202.

[84] Ros Taplin, 'International Environmental Regimes: Analytical Perspectives and Insights from the Global Climate Change Regime Process', Paper presented at the Australasian Political Studies Association Annual Conference, Monash University, 29 Sept 1 October 1993.

uniform standards for greenhouse gas emissions raised doubts about the efficacy of the Climate Change Convention, there is general acknowledgement that some issues threaten the interests of all states, and that no state acting on its own could provide an adequate response to such issues. International regimes offer a means to overcome the limitations of states and unilateralism in confronting some of the challenges of the contemporary state system.

There has been a proliferation of international regimes in recent years in response to the growing number of transboundary environmental issues affecting states. These include the Southern Blue Fin Tuna Treaty, which addresses the issue of resource management for highly migratory species; the Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships, which deals with pollution from ships; and the South Pacific Regional Environmental Programme, which manages the environment at a regional level. Consequently, there is a wealth of literature that focused on the role of international regimes as an organising theme for the state system.[85] However, many of these perspectives are tinged with Idealism, and portray a state system driven by the imperatives of ecological determinism.[86]

Notwithstanding the persuasiveness of the advocates whose interests emphasised environmental issues, the growing number of international regimes also emerged as a response to other transboundary issues. Cross-border crime continues to be an issue that defies unilateral solutions.[87] For example, the spate of sea-robberies in the Straits of Malacca in the early 1990s was a problem with transboundary crime that was only

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[85] See for example, Oran R. Young, International Governance: Protecting the Environment In A Stateless Society, Ithaca, Cornell University Press, 1994.
[86] See for example, Alan Lipietz, Green Hopes: The Future of Political Ecology.
[87] Edmund Chia, 'The Response To Piracy And Sea-Robbery In The Straits Of Malacca And Adjacent Waters: Law Enforcement And Regional Cooperation', unpublished honours thesis, University of Tasmania, 1993; Ellen, Eric, 'Asian Piracy: Who, When, Where, and How', presented at the Asian

(temporarily) resolved with a set of agreements involving Singapore, Malaysia and Indonesia. These agreements established what each state might do in response to sea-robbery in each other's territorial waters and this resulted in more effective Police enforcement.[88] Disputes over overlapping territorial and jurisdictional claims also emerged as issues to which international regimes provided a response. For example, the disputed sovereignty claims over Antarctica created a potential for conflict that was addressed by the creation of the Antarctic Treaty System. The Antarctic Treaty System provided an arrangement that enabled the disputing parties to side step the contentious issue of sovereignty (and later the issue of mineral exploitation), while allowing other activities to proceed unimpeded.[89]

International regimes also flourished as mechanisms to facilitate confidence building and to achieve peace in international relations. The cooperation or coordination or both that is required for the formation and maintenance of a regime is often as important as the regulatory objectives of the regime itself. The means can be as important as (or perhaps even more important than) the ends in the formation and maintenance of an international regime. International regimes are often pursued as confidence building measures, and were particularly significant during the atmosphere of tension affecting international relations during the Cold War.[90] The Incidents at Sea regime arose out of the confrontational brinkmanship that occurred

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Investment Conferences on Piracy In South-East Asia, Regent Hotel, Kuala Lumpur, 28 - 29 July 1992.

[88] Straits Times, Singapore, March 12.

[89] W.M. Bush, 'The Antarctic Treaty System: A Framework For Evolution – The Concept Of A System', in Antarctica's Future: Continuity or Change? R.A. Herr, H.R. Hall, & M.G. Haward (eds.), Hobart, Australian Institute of International Affairs, 1990. pp119-168.

[90] Desmond Ball and Sam Bateman, 'An Australian Perspective on Maritime CSBMs in the Asia-Pacific Region', in A Peaceful Ocean? Maritime Security in the Pacific in the Post-Cold War Era, Andrew Mack (ed.), Kuala Lumpur, Allen & Unwin, 1993. pp158-186.

when American and Soviet warships encountered each other at sea during the Cold War.[91]

> "[r]ecognition of the dangers of naval incidents eventually led the United States and the Soviet Union to negotiate their Incidents at Sea Agreement in 1971-72."[92]

The procedural rituals that this regime imposed guided all subsequent encounters between American and Soviet warships and "is widely regarded as having successfully reduced the frequency and severity of superpower naval incidents while building greater trust and confidence at sea."[93] Thus, international regimes served to alleviate the mistrust and tension between states through the patterned and predictable arrangements that they establish.[94]

It should be noted that a distinction should be made between once-off ventures and the sustained arrangements for cooperation and coordination that are institutionalised through regimes. Summit meetings and similar events might be deemed to be confidence building measures, but they are hardly 'regimes' - not even by the loose standards adopted for that term by this paper. In contrast, international regimes can represent the efforts of states to sustain and institutionalise desirable multilateral arrangements as a policy to improve relations with one another. The Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) illustrated the usefulness of institutionalised arrangements in this regard.

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[91] Sean M. Lynn-Jones, 'Agreements to Prevent Incidents at Sea and Dangerous Military Activities: Potential Applications in the Asia-Pacific Region'. pp44-61.

[92] Sean M. Lynn-Jones, 'Agreements to Prevent Incidents at Sea and Dangerous Military Activities: Potential Applications in the Asia-Pacific Region', in A Peaceful Ocean? Maritime Security in the Pacific in the Post-Cold War Era, Andrew Mack (ed.), Kuala Lumpur, Allen & Unwin, 1993. p46.

[93] Sean M. Lynn-Jones, 'Agreements to Prevent Incidents at Sea and Dangerous Military Activities: Potential Applications in the Asia-Pacific Region'. p44.

[94] Sam Bateman, 'Maritime Confidence and Security Building Measures and the Law of Sea', presented at the Conference on Confidence Building and Conflict Reduction In The Pacific, Kuala Lumpur, 6-9 June 1993.

> "The Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN) was created in 1967 to promote regional reconciliation and manage intramural disputes following a period of tension between Indonesia and Malaysia."[95]

At its inception, the members of the Association of South East Asian Nations had little in common. In fact, Indonesia, Malaysia, and Singapore had just emerged from a period of hostile political and military confrontation with one another. Thus, in contrast to the usual objectives of establishing collective arrangements for security or trade, its primary purpose was to function as a confidence building measure, and any other functional role tended to be incidental. Nevertheless, ASEAN represented a regime that resulted in a set of principles, norms, rules, and decision-making procedures, both formal and informal, which in turn established a basis for the development of functional cooperation on other issues, and a sense of common identity, among its member.[96] Indeed, it might be argued that the ASEAN had evolved into a structure that might, to some extent, and through consensus, shape the individual foreign policies of its member states.[97] Therefore, there is a significant difference between multilateralism, which simply refers to activity in international relations that involved more than two states, and multilateral institutional arrangements, which described the repetitive and predictable processes in which two or more states were engaged. Institutional arrangements should be distinguished from once-off ventures, because the former develops structures that are sustainable to

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[95] James E. Goodby & Daniel B. O'Connor, 'The Utility Of International Organisations For Collective Action In Regional Conflict', in Regional Conflicts: The Challenge To US-Russian Co-operation, James E. Goodby (ed.), Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1995. pp216-217.

[96] Alison Broinowski (ed.), Understanding ASEAN, London, MacMillan, 1982. Micheal Leifer, ASEAN and the Security of South-East Asia, London, Routledge, 1989. Muthiah Alagappa, 'Regional and the Quest for Security: ASEAN and the Cambodian Conflict', in Journal of International Affairs, 46, 2, Winter 1993. pp439-467. Muthiah Alagappa, 'Regional Arrangements and International Security in Southeast Asia: Going Beyond ZOPFAN', Contemporary Southeast Asia, 12, 4 March 1991. pp269-305.

[97] See for example the ASEAN diplomatic initiatives with respect to the civil aviation dispute with Australia and the diplomatic opposition to the Vietnamese invasion of Cambodia. ASEAN Document Series, 1967-1985, ASEAN Secretariat, Jarkarta, 1985. p191 & pp327-346.

reinforce the original objectives, and which are also capable of evolving, whereas the latter is not.

International regimes have the capacity to guide the actions of states and to affect their interests. While power continues to play a significant role in international relations, in the contemporary state system, we are faced with increasing evidence that power is not usually exercised in an unbridled fashion, and that states are guided by customs, laws, and other expectations in their dealings with one another.[98] Therefore, Realists who posit a view of international relations based on power have not, and perhaps can not repudiate the fact that significant constraints on the capacity of a state to exercise power do exist in the state system.[99] Regimes regulate the way states trade, respond to transboundary problems and arrive at collective decisions. Thus, any discussion of power and powers in the contemporary state system has to account for the role of both states and international regimes in the state system, as well as the dynamics of the relationship between states and international regimes. The growing number of issues in which they share a common interest reflects the increasing interdependence of nation states. Issues such as international trade, the need to deal with transboundary crime, or the urgency of regulating transnational activity to address common concerns such as environmental problems, encourage a multilateral response, and this is seen in the expansion of international regimes.[100]

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[98] Hedley Bull, The Anarchical Society: A Study of Order in World Politics, London, Macmillan, 1977.

[99] James N. Rosenau, 'Subtle Sources of Global Interdependence: Changing Criteria of Evidence, Legitimacy, and Patriotism', in Interdependence and Conflict in World Politics, James N. Rosenau & Hylke Tromp (ed.), Aldershot, Avebury, 1989. pp31-46.

[100] Robert Owen Keohane & Jospeh S. Nye, Power and Interdependence, U.S., Harper Collins, 1989. Robert O. Keohane, & Joseph S. Nye (eds.), Transnational Relations and World Politics, Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 1973. Oran R. Young, International Governance: Protecting the Environment In A Stateless Society, Ithaca, Cornell University Press, 1994. International Maritime Organization, Report of the IMO Working Group on the Malacca Strait Area, 28 February to 10 March 1993.

Consequently, international regimes have pervaded much, if not most aspects, of international life. In an interesting observation that is tinged with idealism, but perhaps reflective of popular opinion, the Encyclopedia Britannica states:

> "The increase in the interdependence of states restricted the principle that might is right in international affairs. The peoples of the world have recognized that there can be no peace without law and no that there can be no law without some limitations on sovereignty. They have started, therefore, to pool their sovereignties to the extent needed to maintain peace, and sovereignty is being increasingly exercised on behalf of the peoples of the world not only by national governments but also by organs of the world community."[101]

The growing institutionalisation of international relations represented by international regimes suggests that multilateral institutional arrangements must also be studied as potential instruments of state policy in foreign relations, if we are to fully appreciate the capacity of a state to defend its interests within the state system.

The Significance Of The 'Neo-Schools'

In response to the issues canvassed above, and other issues raised by the growing presence of international regimes in the state system, two 'new' schools of thought in the study of international relations emerged. The advocates of these schools of thought have been labelled Neoliberals and Neorealists.

Neoliberalists or Institutionalists assign greater importance to the effect of regimes on the state system.[102] They hold regimes to be significant for the predictability of

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[101] Encyclopaedia Britannica CD ROM Edition, 1997.

[102] Some Neoliberalists appear to prefer the new label of 'contractualist' or 'contractual theorists'. Keohane explains: "In After Hegemony, I referred to a functional theory' of international regimes. However, since that phrase carries connotations of sociological functionalism, with which I do not

the processes that they institutionalise and contend that regimes place the exercise of power by rational state actors under specific constraints. Neoliberalists regard:

> "... these patterns of practice as significant because they affect state behaviour. Sophisticated institutionalists do not expect cooperation always to prevail, but they are aware of the malleability of interests and they argue that interdependence creates interests in cooperation."[103]

Thus, Neoliberalists argue that rational actors allow themselves to be guided by regimes, not because they are compelled by a greater power, but because it is in their interest as a rational and egotistical actor to do so.[104] In contrast to traditional utopian arguments where altruism supplied the motive for cooperation, Neoliberals argue that selfish egoism from rational actors can also supply an interest in the construction of, support for, and participation in, regimes that act as constraints on power within the state system.

Neoliberalists share some of the assumptions that Realists hold and are acutely conscious of traditional Realist objections to utopian assumptions of authority that supersedes the jurisdiction of sovereign states. Keohane acknowledges this when he states that:

> "Institutionalists do not elevate international regimes to mythical positions of authority over states: on the contrary, such regimes are established by states to achieve their purposes. ... Nevertheless, those institutions that succeed in facilitating mutually beneficial cooperation will become valued for the opportunities they provide to states, they will therefore acquire a certain degree of permanence, and their rules will constrain the exercise of power by governments. Governments will still seek to attain their ends,

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identify, I now use the language of 'contractualism' rather than functionalism'." – Robert O. Keohane, 'The Analysis of International Regimes: Towards a European-American Research Programme', in Regime Theory and International Relations, Volker Rittberger (ed.), Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1997. p36, footnote 6.

[103] Robert O. Keohane, After Hegemony: Cooperation and Discord in the World Political Economy. p8.

[104] Notwithstanding the fact that decisions in international relations are not always guided by rationality.

> including increasing their shares of the gains from cooperation through the use of political influence. However, the exercise of influence will depend not merely on their material capabilities but also on the relationship between their ends and means on the one hand, and the rules and practices of the international institution, on the other."[105]

Therefore, Neoliberalists do not discount the potency of power in international relations and share the Realists' premise of states as selfish egotistical actors. However, they contend that selfish egoism does not preclude the existence of common interests, and that where such harmony of interests arise, states are prepared to constrain their use of power through institutional arrangements to achieve their desired purpose. Neoliberals see the growth in international regimes as empirical evidence that states are prepared to voluntarily submit themselves to mechanisms that constrain their actions and regard international institutions as forums for international relations that affect and are affected by states in pursuit of their interests.[106]

In contrast to the Neoliberalists, Neorealists acknowledge the role of international regimes in international relations, but argue that such institutions have but minimal impact on traditional perspectives of power politics.[107] Indeed some argue that:

> "The very term neorealism is contentious, because many realists regard the ideas it conveys as containing nothing that would merit the prefix 'neo'."[108]

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[105] Robert O. Keohane, 'Institutionalist Theory, Realist Challenge'. p274.

[106] See R.M. Axelrod & R.O. Keohane, The Evolution of Cooperation, New York, 1984. Elinor Ostrom, Governing the Commons: The Evolution of Institutions for Collective Action, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1990. Oran Young, International Cooperation: Building Regimes for Natural Resources and the Environment, Ithaca, Cornell University Press, 1989. Oran Young, 'The Politics of International Regime Formation: Managing Natural Resources and the Environment', in International Organization, 43. pp 349-75.

[107] Miles Kahler, 'Institutional-Building In the Pacific', in Pacific Cooperation: Building Economic and Security Regimes in the Asia-Pacific Region, Andrew Mack and John Ravenhill (eds.), St Leonard's, Allen & Unwin, 1994.

[108] Chris Brown, Understanding International Relations.

Neorealists argue that considerations of 'absolute gain', advanced by Neoliberalists to support their proposition of a tendency towards the institutionalisation of international relations, does not adequately address the issue of 'relative gains'. Grieco points out the crux of the dispute between the Neorealists and the Neoliberals when he states:

> "My realist-informed argument begins with the point that, for weaker partners, the rules of collaborative arrangements will provide them with more or fewer opportunities for having effective 'voice opportunities" in the process of deciding how cooperation will proceed with the arrangement and thus how they will be treated by their stronger partners. This yields what I call the binding thesis: if states share a common interest and undertake negotiations on rules constituting a collaborative arrangement, then the weaker but still influential partners will seek to ensure that the rules so construed will provide for effective voice opportunities for them and will thereby prevent or at least ameliorate their domination by stronger partners."[109]

Thus, the focus of a Neorealist argument is not so much how multilateral institutional arrangements can satisfy common interests, but rather how those arrangements will affect the relative position of states within the state system. As Grieco put it:

> "... realists view states as what I have called "defensive positionalists" interested in achieving and maintaining relative capabilities sufficient to remain secure and independent in the self-help context of international anarchy"[110]

The inference made by the Neorealist arguments is that states will resist institutional arrangements, even when common interests are served, if they believe that they would gain less from the arrangement than other states.[111]

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[109] Joseph M. Grieco, 'International Cooperation', in Neorealism and Neoliberalism: The Contemporary Debate, David A. Baldwin (ed.), New York, Columbia University Press, 1993. p331.
[110] Joseph M. Grieco, 'International Cooperation'. p303.
[111] Joseph M. Grieco, 'Anarchy and the Limits of Cooperation: A Realist Critique of the Newest Liberal Institutionalism', in Neorealism and Neoliberalism: The Contemporary Debate, David A. Baldwin (ed.), New York, Columbia University Press, 1993.

Egotistical priorities and inter-state rivalry can also affect the effectiveness of multilateral arrangements, especially regional institutions, even though cooperation might appear to be the rational course of action.[112] An example of the impediment that relative costs presents to the challenge of developing cooperative institutional arrangements is seen in the difficulties of initiating regional action in Southeast Asia to address the issue of marine pollution from land based sources. Davis and Williams states that:

> "[T]here are considerable differences in terms of resource endowment and economic strength among Asian nations and a desire to avoid a situation where laxity of environmental control by one nation is perceived as a comparative advantage relative to neighbouring states who may be pursuing environmental regulation and sustainability goals."[113]

Thus, Realists argue that Neoliberalism adds little to our understanding of international relations, as the motivation and actions of states within such institutional arrangements simply mirror the patterns of behaviour already described by the traditional Realist theories.[114]

Neorealism builds on the arguments of its Realist forebears by acknowledging the significance of international regimes in international relations and endeavouring to account for the different guises of that power assumes in the contemporary state

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[112] K. Snidvongs, 'Sustainable Development of Coastal Areas: The Southeast Asian Experience', Paper presented at the Coastal & Maritime Zone Planning & Management Conference, Centre for Maritime Policy, University of Wollongong, 9-10 September 1994. An alternative view is presented in Desmond Ball, 'The Most Promising CSBMs for the Asia/Pacific Region', Paper presented at the conference on The Asia-Pacific Region: Links between Economic and Security Relations, Institute on Global Conflict and Cooperation (IGCC), University of California, May 1993.

[113] Bruce Davis & Caroline Williams, 'Regional Action on Land-Sourced Marine Pollution in Southeast Asia: An initial reconnaissance', Paper presented at International Boundaries and Environmental Security: Frameworks for Regional Cooperation Conference, 14-17 June 1995, RELC Singapore. See also T. Falkenberg, 'Trade and Environment: The Difficult Debate', International Challenges, Vol 14, No 1, 1994, pp33-43.

[114] See Kenneth N. Waltz, Theory of International Politics, Mass, Reading, 1979. Robert Gilpin, War and Change in World Politics, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1981. Joseph M. Grieco, Cooperation Among Nations: Europe, America and Non-Tarrif Barriers to Trade, Ithaca, Cornell

system. This broader perspective of power held by Neorealists may be contrasted with Realist theories, which were regarded as conventional wisdom in an earlier era and based on the assumption that military power represented the primary, if not only, means of defending state interests. As Cox explains,

> "The 'new realism' has in common with the old realism a concern with power relations; but it finds the power relations of the present, those that bear upon world order, to be different from those assumed to be dominant in conventional state-centred thinking."[115]

Chris Brown has made a similar observation and states that,

> "... most observers ... feel that something did change with realism in response to the pluralist challenge; [and that] neo-realism is one way of noting this change, [and] its synonym 'structured realism' another."[116]

Technological and social changes have resulted in a plethora of transnational relationships, ranging from people to people linkages through mediums such as the Internet to non-government organisations with international agendas to multinational corporations. These transnational interests complicate the process of identifying state interests and require states to re-examine the traditional methods through which power and diplomacy is exercised. Thus, while Neorealism continued to be guided by the direction taken by traditional Realist theories, it takes a divergent path in order to account for these changes in the state system.

Upon closer inspection, Neorealist and Neoliberalist appear to share some common views on international relations. Both schools of thought see states as selfish, egotistical, but rational actors that construct or exploit international regimes within

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University Press, 1990. David Lake, Power, Protection, and Free Trade: International Sources of U.S. Commercial Strategy, 1887-1939, Ithaca, Cornell University Press, 1988.

[115] Robert W. Cox, 'Reconsiderations', in The New Realism: Perspectives on Multilateralism & World Order, Robert W. Cox (ed.), Tokyo, United Nations University Press, 1997. p245.

the state system for advantage. While the Neorealist and Neoliberalist offer competing explanations for the role of regimes and states in international relations, they are not irreconcilable. In essence, Neoliberalists assert that "institutions that succeed in facilitating mutually beneficial cooperation will become valued for the opportunities they provide to states".[117] By adding a proviso that states would only engage in collaborative arrangements that did not compromise their relative strength vis-à-vis other states, Neorealists simply refined the arguments advanced by Neoliberalists by stating the terms under which states sought to participate in such arrangements. The hypothesis advanced by Neoliberals, that rational and egotistical states seek out and participate in international institutions in order "to attain their ends, including increasing their shares of the gains from cooperation through the use of political influence", is not refuted.[118] Therefore, both schools of thought appear to be arguing that regimes do or can represent an arena wherein states defend their national interests, albeit with different points of emphasis.

The opportunity for states to legitimise, defend and pursue their interests in the state system exists in the processes leading to the determination of, as well as in the principles, norms, rules, and decision-making procedures contained in, international regimes.[119] Thus, the discourse between the Neorealists and Neoliberalists facilitates our appreciation of international relations by addressing not just the ostensible purposes that regimes serve, but also the egotistical state interests that are satisfied by such regimes.

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[116] Chris Brown, Understanding International Relations. p45.
[117] Robert O. Keohane, 'Institutionalist Theory, Realist Challenge'. p274.
[118] Robert O. Keohane, 'Institutionalist Theory, Realist Challenge'. p274.
[119] It has been suggested that both neorealism and neoliberalism are time-bound to this present historical era, with its unique and historically specific geo-political conditions, and thus, more appropriate labels for them might be 'Westphalian realism' and 'Westphalian liberalism'. See Mark

Issues For The Contemporary State System

The traditional theories of Idealism and Realism, which purport to supply a rationale for international relations, fail to adequately address the issues raised by the existence and growing number of international regimes within the state system. Idealism is really premised on what ought to be, as opposed to positing an explanation for what is. It can be argued that the development of a state system that increasingly relies on international regimes to regulate the behaviour of states, or to impose obligations and responsibilities on states, or both, represents an 'ideal' for supporters of global or international governance. However, Idealists have generally failed to address the issue of how such regimes come about, and whether they are genuinely based on universally accepted ideals or if they merely give institutional expression to the preferences of hegemonic powers. While Realism purports to account for what actually happens in the state system, it too does not adequately account for the emergence and proliferation of international regimes. Not even when many of these regimes represent, at the very least, institutions that can moderate the use, and diminish the role, of power.

The growing number and presence of international regimes, and their role in the determination of "who gets what, when, where, and how" in international relations, raises several issues. One of the primary issues that has generated much discussion is the possibility that states may exploit the opportunities offered by international regimes, both as an arena and an instrument, to defend national interests.[120]

W. Zacher, Governing Global Networks: International Regimes for Transportation and Communications. p18.

[120] Clive Archer, International Organizations, London, George Allen & Unwin, 1983. p130. Archer was actually referring specifically to international organisations, but the concept he raised would be

International regimes represent "sets of implicit or explicit principles, norms, rules, and decision-making procedures around which actors' expectations converge in a given area of international relations".[121] However, the notion of a convergence in the expectations of actors does not offer insight as to whether this process can be deliberately manipulated or the conditions under which states would voluntarily submit to regimes or whether the coincidence of interests in international relations is natural, irresistible and inevitable. Instead, it is only through examining the dynamics of regime creation and maintenance that we discover whether competitive interests continue to be a significant factor, even in international arrangements whose ostensible intent is to facilitate cooperation or coordination. For instance, Perrow argues that:

> "... there is always a struggle within an institution because control of that institution can bring a variety of rewards including security, power, and survival."[122]

International regimes give rise to principles, norms and decision-making procedures, affecting the interests of all states that fall within their regulatory arrangements. Therefore, it would only be natural to expect states involved in the creation, maintenance, or both, of international regimes to seek to maximise their interests while doing so. And to ensure that the principles, norms and decision-making procedures that best serve their interests, and which reflect their values, are given expression in regimes where possible. The intuitive inference that follows would be

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applicable to all multilateral institutional arrangements and not just 'formal' organisations. Archer also referred a potential role for international organisations as actors in the state system. However, it is beyond the ambit of this thesis is to discuss in greater detail the metamorphosis of international organisations into independent actors in the state system. Instead, the focus is on states, and in particular how middle powers like Australia exploit multilateral institutional arrangements in order to serve their ends.

[121] Stephen D. Krasner, 'Structural Causes and Regime Consequences: Regimes as Intervening Variables'. p2.

[122] Stephen Krasner, 'Global Communications and National Power'. p243. Krasner was citing the arguments of Perrow in Charles Perrow, Complex Organixations: A Critical Essay, New York, Random House, 1986. p132.

that powerful states are far more likely to get their own way within such arrangements than less powerful states.

In spite of international law, which regards all states as juridical equals, there is often considerable disparity in terms of the resources and power possessed by the states at the bargaining table negotiating international institutional arrangements. Consequently, it should not be surprising if international regimes tend to favour the interests and values of more powerful states. Indeed, it would be unusual if the more powerful states do not seize the opportunity offered by international regimes to assert their preferences on matters affecting their interests.[123] Some scholars have argued that the ability to dominate the agenda of international regimes represents a subtle assertion of hegemonic power.[124] On the other hand, Mark Zacher posts an appropriate reminder that:

> "... there is a host of international regimes governing a myriad of issues ... It would be foolish not to recognize that they are shaped in part by the interests and power of the larger states, but it seems equally foolish not to appreciate their promotion of the interests of the great majority of weaker states."[125]

This thesis recognises the fact that the traditional struggle by states to defend competitive and egotistical interests within the state system is also manifested in the phenomenon of international regimes. However, the key issue that it addresses is whether multilateral institutional arrangements enhance the capacity of states, specifically middle powers, to defend their interests. The Realist premise that military strength is the true measure of power in the state system is compared with

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[123] Mark W. Zacher, Governing Global Networks: International Regimes for Transportation and Communications. p2.

[124] Andrew Wyatt-Walter, 'The United States and Western Europe: The Theory of Hegemonic Stability', in Explaining International Relations Since 1945, Ngaire Woods (ed.), Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1996. Micheal P. Sullivan, Power in Contemporary International Politics, Columbia, University of South Carolina Press, 1990. pp183-209.

the currency of influence that enabled a state to set the agenda for multilateral institutional arrangements. The struggle for influence within multilateral institutional arrangements involves dynamics that are different from the usual considerations that normally guide foreign policy in the absence of such institutions. Realist measures of power are based on the assessment of a state's capacity to impose its will on other states in the absence of multilateral institutional arrangements. However, the acceptance of international regimes by states imposes an obligation to abide by the dictates of those arrangements. Therefore, with respect to issues governed by international regimes, states can not exercise their power arbitrarily in order to carry out their will, but have to defend their interests within the parameters imposed by the terms of those arrangements, if they want those arrangements to remain viable.[126]

If we accept the thesis that multilateral institutional arrangements could be used to advance state interests, then the extent to which power, as recognised within Realist perspectives, is fungible would also be an important question.[127] If power is fungible, that would suggest that the traditional accruements of power possessed by a state can be translated into influence in multilateral institutional arrangements. On the other hand, if power is not fungible, it would suggest that multilateral institutional arrangements represent separate vehicles for influence that are not contingent on possession of traditional sources of power but which can also be used to determine outcomes in international relations. This implies that states traditionally perceived as weak might be capable of playing a greater role in the state system through the

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[125] Mark W. Zacher, Governing Global Networks: International Regimes for Transportation and Communications. p2.

[126] In point of fact, states could ignore the conditions set by multilateral institutional arrangements, but frequent and wilful disregard for international regimes is, by definition, impossible. Regimes describe a fact of compliance with a pattern of behaviour that was repetitive and predictable. In the absence of general compliance, an international regime does not, by definition, exist.

[127] Fungibility refers to the ease with which capabilities in one issue-area can be used in other issue areas. David A. Baldwin, 'Neoliberalism, Neorealism, and World Politics', in Neorealism and

medium of multilateral institutional arrangements, whereas states traditionally perceived as powerful might experience a diminished capacity for coercion within such arrangements.

A cursory glance at some contemporary regimes suggests that, in comparison to military strength, scientific expertise or diplomacy or economic resources may be more useful guides to the ability of states to command influence in international relations. Kegley and Raymond observes that:

> "Power is situationally specific: The components of a nation's resource base are relatively low in fungibility or usability. The military capabilities that allow an actor to influence one set of countries in a certain issue area may be useless in influencing other countries on a different matter."[128]

If this observation is valid, then the proposition that multilateral institutional arrangements offer some states greater opportunities for influence than would otherwise be commensurate with their status as a 'power' in the context of Realist perceptions of the state system, is sustained. The argument that small or middle powers can play a significant role in the state system through multilateral institutional arrangements, above and beyond the role ascribed to them by Realist inspired perceptions of the state system is reinforced by (relatively) recent empirical evidence.

In the negotiation of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, it was noted that states abandoned traditional security alignments and realign themselves in

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Neoliberalism: The Contemporary Debate, David A. Baldwin (ed.), New York, Columbia University Press, 1993. p20.

[128] Charles W. Kegley, Jr. & Gregory A. Raymond, A Multipolar Peace? Great Power Politics in the Twenty-First Century. p16.

order to secure their interests within that regime.[129] Geographically disadvantaged states, archipelagic states, and the major maritime states aligned themselves according to their specific goals, as opposed to traditional loyalties, in order to pursue their interests more effectively within the context of United Nations Law of the Sea Conference. That 'power' remains an important consideration is seen in the fact that the United States was able to replace Part 11 of that Convention with an amended agreement more amenable to its interests.[130] The 1994 Agreement Relating To The Implementation Of Part XI based almost completely on the United States' objections to Part XI of the Law of the Sea was clearly a concession to the great power interests of the latter. The Agreement legitimised the influence of the United States and ensured that it is able to defend its interests in all aspects of deep seabed mining covered by international law.[131] Nevertheless, the fact that the United States chose to pursue its interests within the context of the United Nations Law of the Sea Convention, as opposed to abandoning the process completely, is in itself a significant acknowledgement of the importance of international regimes as a vehicle for legitimising state interests.

It is also noteworthy that military power was not a significant determinant of influence during the negotiation of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the

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[129] Biliana Cincin-Sain & Robert W. Knecht, 'Implications of the Earth Summit for Ocean and Coastal Governance', in Ocean Development And International Law, Volume 24, Number 4, October - December 1993. Tommy Koh, The Quest for World Order: Perspectives of a Pragmatic Idealist, Singapore, Institute of Policy Studies, 1998. pp141-142.

[130] The 1994 Agreement Relating To The Implementation Of Part XI and United States Objections To The U.N. Convention On The Law Of The Sea, signed at New York, 28 July 1994. For another study of how the United States was able to resist regimes not amenable to its interests, see Barston's study of the Montreal meeting (6-10 June 1994) on Land-based sources of marine pollution. R.P. Barston, Modern Diplomacy, second edition, London, Longman, 1997. pp187-190.

[131] Hasjim Djalal, "Recent developments in the Law of the Sea", a luncheon speech by the Indonesian Ambassador-at-large on day one of the 29th Annual Conference of the Law of the Sea Institute, "Sustainable development and preservation of the oceans: the challenges of UNCLOS and Agenda 21", June 19-22, 1995, Denpasar, Bali, Indonesia.

Sea.[132] Indeed, the United Nations Law Convention on the Law of the Sea demonstrated that skills in diplomacy and coalition building are as important as Realist considerations of power. Thus, small powers like Singapore and Luxembourg were able to defend their interests successfully, in respect of land-locked and geographically disadvantaged states, within the institutional processes available during the negotiations to establish the Law of the Sea.[133]

The skill and success of small or middle powers in defending their interests through multilateral institutional arrangements can also be seen in the Cairns Group, influential economic blocs such as the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries, and political lobby groups like the Association of South East Asian Nations.[134] These examples are not intended to demonstrate that law or some other ideal has replaced *realpolitik* considerations in the state system or that traditional realist premises of competitive and egotistical states, whose primary goal is to defend narrow self-interest, have been abandoned. Indeed, balance of power theories from the realist tradition may be used to explain the role of multilateral arrangements like the Cairns Group or the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries within the state system.[135] That is to say multilateral institutional arrangements can represent an attempt by small and medium powers to 'gang-up' against more powerful states. However, non force-oriented perspectives of international relations contend that

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[132] This is not to say that military power did not have a bearing on all aspects of the Law of the Sea. The U.S. policy of sailing warships through sea lanes claimed as territorial waters, to challenge the interpretation of international law by archipelagic nations like Indonesia, and to reinforce conventions in international customary law, would suggest that military power still plays a role. David Jenkins, 'Dire Straits: Indonesia's Threat to our Ships', in Sydney Morning Herald, 12 June 1993. Nevertheless, the 'compromise' with the United States on Part XI pertaining to deep sea beds has little to do with military power, and more to do with the extent of American economic interests.

[133] Tommy Koh, The Quest for World Order: Perspectives of a Pragmatic Idealist. pp20-24.

[134] Andrew F. Cooper, Richard A. Higgott, and Kim Richard Nossal, Relocating Middle Powers: Australia and Canada in a Changing World Order, Vancouver, Melbourne University Press, 1993. Alison Broinowski (ed.), Understanding ASEAN.

[135] For a discussion of balance of power theories, see the classic by Hans J. Morgenthau, Politics Among Nations: The Struggle for Power and Peace (fifth edition). Or a more recent discussion by Chris Brown, Understanding International Relations, London, MacMillan, 1997. pp104-110.

multilateral institutional arrangements represent an additional dimension in the state system, wherein the rules are different, and where power and influence are measured differently.

The rule-based nature of modern multilateral institutional arrangements distinguished them from the simple grouping of states in traditional balance of power theories. The latter represents a coalition of states bound together by common interests, whereas the former represented a more complex arrangement that is defined by both common interests as well as common rules. Moreover, even though some argue that egotistical states only engaged in multilateral institutional arrangements to defend the 'status quo',[136] the dynamics of power, influence and interests within such arrangements would be significantly different from that of a general state system where different rules (some say no rules) applied.

The fact that small and middle powers can exploit multilateral institutional arrangements to defend their interests in the state system suggests that influence in international relations is not necessarily contingent upon possession of the traditional accoutrements of power. Instead, as the success of Singapore and Luxembourg at the Law of the Sea negotiations demonstrate, other factors may also affect the ability of a state to defend its interest. As multilateral institutional arrangements can potentially be exploited to serve the interests of states, they can be regarded both as an instrument used to advance state policy as well as an arena where state interests are defended. This provides a framework for investigating the role of middle powers in

[136] Indeed, it has been argued that the normative goals, inherent in a middle power's calculation, for a post-hegemonic world includes promoting greater social equity and a greater diffusion of power. Thus, the role that middle powers play in encouraging institutional arrangements "to affirm the principle of adherence to acceptable rules of conduct by all powers, great and small" may be seen as the act of a defensive positionalist. Robert W. Cox & Timothy J. Sinclair, Approaches to World Order. p250.

international relations, as well as the extent to which multilateral institutional arrangements enable middle powers to influence developments within their region.

Conclusion

This chapter has reviewed the framework of the state system and provided the context for the concept of a 'middle power'. It has described a political environment based on a general state system comprising sovereign states that are legally equal but who interact with one another on the basis of power. The capacity of states to defend their interests within the state system is varied and this has led to the proposition that they may be classified as great, middle and small powers accordingly. The classification of states in terms of their capacity to influence international relations has provided a useful guide to the potential role of states in the state system. However, the capacity of states to influence international relations is constrained not only by their power relative to that of other states but also by the proliferation of international regimes, representing regulatory arrangements or institutionalised processes, that define or guide the actions of states. Regimes have imposed structure on international relations and effectively represented multilateral institutional arrangements through which states could defend their interests within the general state system. International regimes have also introduced a new dimension to international relations, presenting new opportunities for states to influence developments within the state system.

It is also argued in this chapter that while power, perceived by Realists as the option to resort to coercive force, remains significant, it has become less relevant in the

determination of who gets what, when, where, and how in the contemporary state system. Technological development, economic and social revolution have resulted in complex interdependence such that the interests of many states, including great powers, incorporate substantial commitment not just to system influence but also system maintenance. The latter, which emphasises orderly procedures, has reinforced the value of multilateral institutional arrangements, even for egotistical states that possessed the traditional accruements of power.

The trade off between a power-defined and a rule-ordered system, in favour of the latter, suggests opportunities for small and middle powers to exert greater influence within the state system. However, this also raises questions about the validity of traditional perceptions of states as small, middle or great powers, and the use of a state's physical attributes as a benchmark for estimating its influence within the state system. As a consequence of the nature of multilateral institutional arrangements, the currency of influence within such arrangements may be substantially different from that in the general state system. This lends substance to the proposition that multilateral institutional arrangements may enhance the (relative) capacity of some states for influence in international relations, while diminishing the (relative) capacity of others. Therefore, a review of the relevance of the concept of a middle power for the contemporary state system is in order. The next chapter debates the definitional issues surrounding the concept of middle powers and investigates the foundation upon which their capacity to influence developments within the contemporary state system is built.

CHAPTER 2

> "The initial driving force is simply the urge to self-preservation. It is rooted in realism. But self-preservation, even in this critical period, is not seen as an end in itself. ... if nations are to live a good and civilized life they cannot live to themselves, but must be prepared to take part, to the full measure of resources, in common effort with other nations. Only by that collaboration can they and others be given freedom from tyranny and from want. If this collaboration is to be effective, it must be carried out in accordance with agreed principles. The task of the statesman is to formulate these principles, to win their free acceptance by those whom they affect, in his own and other countries, and to put them into practice. In this way national interests become harmonized in world interests, but not obliterated by them; and realism becomes inspired by idealism." - MacMahon Ball[1]

Introduction

The previous chapter discussed the nature of power in general state system and drew attention to the theory that states may be differentiated in terms of their ability to defend their interests through power. This chapter focuses on states situated in the middle range of that spectrum, and investigates the role of states described as middle powers in international relations. The objective is to establish a better understanding of how a middle power can be defined and thereby provide an analytical framework to guide the discussion in subsequent chapters, which investigate the sources from which middle power influence is derived.

Power is not an easy or only indicator of international status even though it remains an important one. As demonstrated in the previous chapter, the discourse between Neoliberalists and the Neorealists offers two competing sets of assumptions about the role of states and international institutions in the state system. These differing accounts of the state system inevitably raise definitional problems for the concept of middle powers, particularly as the concept is exacerbated by both nominal and operational ambiguity. Nevertheless, this definitional morass must be traversed if we are to usefully apply the concept of middle powers in modern application.

This chapter begins by exploring the concept of a middle power. The nominal definitions of 'middle power', which have been traditionally applied in the literature, are canvassed. It is proposed that these nominal definitions tend to fall into two categories, based on structuralist perspectives and process oriented perspectives of international relations. Structuralist perspectives tend to assume a Realist or Neorealist view of international relations, and employ quantitative measures to define middle powers, as those states falling between great powers and small powers, in terms of the resources that they command or the range of interests that they are capable of defending. In contrast, process oriented perspectives tend to be more Rational or Neoliberal in philosophical orientation. Process oriented perspectives tend to emphasise the role of multilateral institutional arrangements in international relations, and define middle powers as those states with a proclivity for, and the ability to assume a leadership role, in such arrangements.

It will be demonstrated that neither of these nominal definitions is fully satisfactory. The difficulties in constructing an exhaustive checklist of quantifiable attributes in

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[1]MacMahon Ball, 'Introduction', in H.V. Evatt, Foreign Policy of Australia: Speeches, Sydney, Angus & Robertson Ltd, 1945. pxix.

order to measure power, as well as the problems encountered in accessing the significance of qualitative attributes, limits the utility of nominal definitions derived from structuralist perspectives. Whereas, the difficulty of maintaining an exclusive measure in order to differentiate between middle powers and other states, which have assumed a leadership role or achieved influence while engaged in multilateral processes, limit the utility of nominal definitions derived from process oriented perspectives. Moreover, while the nominal definitions represented by the structuralist and process oriented perspectives provide a convincing exposition of middle powers, it can be argued that these accounts are valid only within the context of their respective theoretical frameworks. Thus, it is proposed that these nominal definitions of middle powers have limited utility and are inadequate when tested against empirical experiences characterised by historical and geographical diversity.

In order to canvas an understanding of middle powers that is not limited by the 'ideal types' assumed in structuralist and process oriented perspectives, a broader working definition for middle powers that is generically applicable will be constructed. It is proposed that the consensus inferred from all the nominal definitions of middle powers examined suggests that *a middle power is a state with both the ambition and the capacity, to exercise significant influence in a specific but limited, arena of international relations.* Thus, ambition and the capacity for influence are identified as common themes found in both the structuralist and process oriented inspired definitions of middle powers, and they are adopted as benchmarks for a generic definition of middle powers in this thesis. The difficulties of establishing what represents 'significant influence' is also an issue that needs to be addressed. For the purposes of this thesis, it shall be stipulated that the manifestation of a capacity to defend general interests, such as the ability to guide developments and decision

making, within a geographic region, is sufficient to demonstrate the presence of 'significant influence'.

Finally, having addressed the issue of how a middle power might be identified, other questions are explored. How do middle powers assume a role of influence? What are the primary methods used to manifest influence? Do the methods used to establish influence vary from region to region? In order to address these questions Australia's role as a middle power in four separate geographic regions will be examined in the subsequent chapters. To guide that discussion, the initial template is elaborated upon to produce an additional framework for analysis that addresses the question of whether Australia can claim the status of a middle power, as well as the bases of its ability to claim significant influence within its geographic region. The review of the literature on middle powers suggests that there are two main schools of thought on how a middle power is able to achieve influence in international relations. Structuralist perspectives argue that physical attributes are the primary determinant of middle power status and the capacity of a state to influence developments in international relations. In contrast, process oriented perspectives argue that the role of middle powers, in the contemporary state system, is characterised by their capacity to achieve influence through multilateral institutional arrangements. Therefore, it is reasonable to anticipate that Australia's influence in regional affairs, if any, would be based upon either or both these factors. Consequently, the working definition developed in this chapter provides a useful reference point from which to begin the investigation of Australia's role as a middle power in its region. In addition to verifying Australia's ambition and capacity to assume a role of significant influence within its regional environment, the extent to which physical resources, multilateral institutional arrangements, or other factors have played a part in

achieving that influence will also be queried. This analytical guide helps to maintain consistency in the discussion on Australia's role in the four geographic regions, and in the investigation of the principal factors that allows Australia to achieve significant influence as a middle power.

The Concept Of Middle Powers In The State System

In the discourse on the role of powers in the state system, the focus has been traditionally placed on the great powers.[2] In contrast, there has been relatively little said about the contributions of the 'lesser' powers. Nossal observes that:

> "Most of the reflections on the shape of the post-Cold War international order tend to focus on the future relationships among the great powers. Few analysts have been as resolutely great power-centric in their approach as Kennedy (1987), but concerns over the relations between the United States, Japan, Europe, Russia, and China tend to be an inexorable feature of the new international order."[3]

Where the literature does refer to the role of middle powers in the state system, there is a tendency to dismiss their significance or to discuss them in the context of great powers.[4] Indeed, Wight remarks that:

> "[t]he only distinction in normal diplomatic intercourse is that between great powers and other powers."[5]

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[2] Anthony G. McGrew & Paul G. Lewis, Global Politics: Globalization and the Nation State, Cambridge, Polity Press, 1989.
[3] Kim Richard Nossal, 'Middle Power Diplomacy in the Changing Asia-Pacific Order: Australia and Canada Compared', in Charting the Post-Cold War Order, Richard Leaver & James L. Richardson (eds.), Boulder, Westview Press, 1993. p210.
[4] Carsten Holbraad, Middle Powers In International Politics, London, Macmillan, 1984. p21.
[5] Martin Wight, Power Politics, Hedley Bull & Carsten Holbraad (eds.), London, Leicester University Press, 1995. p41.

In contrast to the general trend, Australian and Canadian political scientists have sought to make up for the neglect of middle powers in the literature with some interesting studies on the role of middle powers in international relations.[6] In particular, two aspects of middle power diplomacy have been examined; The role of middle powers as the resourceful clients of a great power, and the role of middle powers as 'entrepreneur states' in 'building coalitions of the like-minded' to establish international institutional arrangements. The role these studies ascribed to middle powers, and the manner in which they define 'middle power', are embodied in two distinctive perspectives, which may be described as 'structuralist' and 'process oriented'.

Structuralist Perspectives Of Middle Powers

While Wight himself did not attribute much significance to the role of a middle power in international relations, he did give clear expression to the concept of a middle power. Wight's schema of powers is largely based on the range of interests that a state is deemed capable of defending against the competitive and sometimes irreconcilable interests of other states in the arena of the general state system. To Wight, minor powers (including middle powers) are those that:

> "... have the means of defending only limited interests, and of most of them it is true that they possess only limited interests. ... [and of] some small powers, however, it may be said that the range of their foreign policy is so contracted that they have no interest except the preservation of their independence."[7]

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[6] Coral Bell, Dependent Ally: A Study in Australian Foreign Policy, Melbourne, Oxford University Press, 1988. Andrew F. Cooper, Richard A. Higgott, and Kim Richard Nossal, Relocating Middle Powers: Australia and Canada in a Changing World Order, Vancouver, Melbourne University Press, 1993.

[7] Martin Wight, Power Politics. p65

However, while all minor powers are characterised by the fact that they only have the means to defend limited interests, Wight suggests that it is possible to differentiate between middle powers and other minor (small) powers. Wight highlights the fact that middle powers possess the capacity to defend a range of interests effectively, and that while this capacity of middle powers is limited in comparison with great powers, it extends well beyond the preservation of their own independence and separates middle powers from other minor powers. Certainly, recognition of the distinction between middle powers and other minor powers can be traced to the perception of middle powers, prevalent during the Congress of Vienna, where some states sought to gain a larger voice in the proceedings by claiming a difference between themselves and smaller powers.[8] Therefore, Wight proposes that:

> "Two kinds of minor powers achieve an eminence which distinguishes them from the common run: regional great powers, and middle powers. Political pressures do not operate uniformly throughout the states-system, and in certain regions which are culturally united but politically divided, a subordinate international society comes into being, with a states-system reproducing in miniature the features of the general states-system. ... In such sub-systems as these, there will be some states with general interests relative to the limited region and a capacity to act alone, which gives them the appearance of local great powers. ... Such regional great powers will probably be candidates, in the state-system at large, for the rank of middle power."[9]

Wight's concept of middle powers portrays them as states that only have the means to defend limited interests within the general state system, but which possess the attributes of great powers within their geographic region. This archetype of middle powers distinguishes them from small powers whose ability to defend their interests is limited even within the confines of their geographical region, and from great powers that are not limited by their geography and capable of defending general

[8] Carsten Holbraad, Middle Powers In International Politics. p21.

interests throughout the state system. The capacity to defend global interests, as opposed to regional interests, has also been cited by other scholars as the factor that distinguished great powers from minor powers.

> "Michael Haas distinguished more simply between major, middle and minor powers, applying the traditional criteria of global and regional interests. Middle and minor powers, he laid down, had primary interests only within a localised regional system. The former were 'locally prominent actors, who may be sought as allies by major powers but who are never leaders of a subsystem'. The only comfort of such powers, he thought, was that they could put minor powers in their place."[10]

Again, this reiterates the theme of middle powers as being less than 'great', but more than 'small' within a structural hierarchy of states in the state system.

The differentiation of states into great, middle or small powers provides the basis for the construction of theoretical models of the state system expressed as structural hierarchies. Such hierarchical structures are usually based on Realist appraisals of the means by which a state is capable of defending its interests within the state system. This capacity to defend state interests is in turn usually inferred from the possession of physical attributes commonly held to reflect the power of a state and determines its ability to defend its interests.[11] Morgenthau, for example, cites geography, national resources, military preparedness, population, national character, national morale, quality of government, industrial capability and quality of diplomacy as attributes that define the power of a state.[12] While qualitative attributes like national character, morale or quality of government are recognised as significant, they are usually regarded by Realists as sufficient, as opposed to necessary conditions, for

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[9] Martin Wight, Power Politics. p63.
[10] Carsten Holbraad, Middle Powers In International Politics. p73.
[11] Some of the attributes commonly used to assemble hierarchical structures were reviewed in the previous chapter.

power. As argued in the previous chapter, Realism is premised upon the capacity to wield coercive power, and therefore, it is the physical attributes, such as population, national resources, and military strength, of a country that are regarded as necessary conditions for power. Moreover, physical attributes can be measured quantitatively and ranked easily, in contrast to non physical attributes, which require qualitative measures and are hence susceptible to subjective biases. Therefore, structuralist hierarchies of power tend to focus on quantifiable attributes, and a simplistic reading of structuralist perceptions is rendered by the view that middle sized countries, with middle sized populations, middle sized economies and middle sized armies may be described as 'middle powers'.

A hierarchical structure for the state system reflects the assumption that middle powers are able to enforce their will over smaller states but lack the capability to resist the will of great powers. Therefore, some authors have advanced the proposition that like other minor powers, a middle power would yield to the need for alliances, or a client relationship with one or more friendly great power, or both, in order to defend its interests against more powerful rivals.[13] In a critique of realist perspectives, MacMahon Ball makes the observation that:

> "The actual tendency today is not to increase but to reduce the rights of small states. Such a policy is seldom frankly avowed, though it is possible for the great Powers to produce plausible arguments in its support. It can be argued that the submission by small powers to the will of their more powerful neighbours is inevitable, and that, since the small nations cannot do anything to avert this, it is sensible for them to group themselves around a controlling great state."[14]

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[12] Hans J. Morgenthau, Politics Among Nations: The Struggle for Power and Peace, (fifth Edition), New York, Knopf, 1985. pp127-183.
[13] Coral Bell, Dependent Ally: A Study in Australian Foreign Policy. See also Charles W. Kegley, Jr. & Gregory A. Raymond, A Multipolar Peace? Great Power Politics in the Twentieth Century, New York, MacMillan, 1994. pp94-96.
[14] MacMahon Ball, 'Introduction', in H.V. Evatt, Foreign Policy of Australia: Speeches, Sydney, Angus & Robertson Ltd, 1945. pviii.

However, Realists suggest that unlike other minor powers, middle powers are better able to resist this tendency to rely on great powers, or at least to mitigate the consequences of such dependence. Scholars who see Australia's role as a resourceful client of a great power even argue that a middle power like Australia can derive some advantage from a dependent relationship with a great power.[15] In *Power Politics*, Wight argues that a middle power:

> "... is a power with such military strength, resources and strategic position that in peacetime the great powers bid for its support, and in wartime, while it has no hope of winning a war against a great power, it can hope to inflict costs on a great power out of proportion to what the great power can gain by attacking it."[16]

Thus, middle powers may be regarded as significant actors in the state system and strategically poised between two or more great powers. Middle powers may be threatened at an undesirable cost, but can be wooed for a strategic gain. Holbraad notes that:

> "In the system of the balance of power, the function of secondary states ... was to provide barriers against territorial encroachments by stronger powers. To do that effectively, these states had to be of a certain size and strength. As had been the case with Clausewitz, the type of separating state with which Gagern was concerned was not a small passive buffer state but a middle-sized power able to play an active part in the balance of power."[17]

Therefore, it can be argued that in a system where the balance of power is an issue, great powers might find the cost of maintaining the 'loyalty' of a middle power, by allowing the latter to exercise some influence, to be less than that of alienating it. This in turn provides the basis for the argument that middle powers in a client-patron

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[15] This is a major theme, for example, in: Coral Bell, Dependent Ally: A Study in Australian Foreign Policy.
[16] Martin Wight, Power Politics. p65.
[17] Carsten Holbraad, Middle Powers In International Politics. p25.

relationship with a great power do not necessarily have to accept the role of a hapless pawn within the context of that relationship.

The nuclear stalemate during the Cold War provided middle powers with many opportunities for influence, and in some circumstances, even the chance to play a pivotal role and act as mediators between the super powers.[18] For example, middle powers were able to seize opportunities not available to great powers in the years of détente during the Cold War. Holbraad observed that:

> "... the improvement in super-power relations allowed some middle-sized powers to take initiatives of their own in regard to the central relationship of international politics, [and also] permitted such powers to assume roles in regional politics which in the years during the Cold War had been less possible."[19]

Thus, middle powers enjoyed a unique position in the state system. They possessed sufficient resources to play a significant role in the state system, yet not enough to appear threatening. Botoro highlights this characteristic of middle powers when he proposed that:

> "Middle-sized states are the most lasting, since they are exposed neither to violence by their weakness nor envy by their greatness, and their wealth and power being moderate, passions are less violent, ambition finds less support and licence less provocation than in large States. Fear of their neighbours restrains them, and even if feelings are roused to anger they are more easily quieted and tranquillity restored ..."[20]

The cynical might regard them as super power proxies, however middle powers are often seen as trustworthy actors in the international arena where, because of their

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[18] H.R. Cowrie, Asia and Australia in World Affairs, Melbourne, Nelson, 1987. pp217-224. See also Thomas Princen, Intermediaries in International Conflict, NJ, Princeton, 1992.
[19] Carsten Holbraad, Middle Powers In International Politics. p4.
[20] G. Botero, The Reason of State, Book I, (trans. By P. J. and D. P. Waley), London, Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1956. pp8-9. cited in Carsten Holbraad, Middle Powers In International Politics, London, Macmillan, 1984. p12.

limited military resources, they are less likely than great powers to be regarded with suspicion and under less constraints with regard to their actions.[21]

Middle powers can create a niche for themselves in international relations because they possess the prestige and resources for international 'shuttle diplomacy' that smaller powers often lack, while being able to avoid the suspicion or resistance that confront, and often confound the efforts of great powers. Robert Cox argues that:

> "Middle powers ... could be an important influence [in international relations] ... because, unlike great powers, they were not suspected of harbouring intentions of domination, and because they had resources sufficient to enable them to be functionally effective."[22]

The significance of this distinction is clearly illustrated by Barston who highlights the demands that modern diplomacy place upon the resources of a state, particularly small states, when he states:

> "Deciding how best to participate effectively is an increasing dilemma for most states, given the increasing volume of international business. The continuous overstretching of resources is reflected in the complaints of many smaller and some larger actors, as we have seen, about their inability to attend multiple meetings of long-standing international conferences. ... Smaller actors too have to increasingly make strategic decisions about whether to attend ad hoc global conferences, as they juggle limited budgets, airline schedules and competing domestic expenditure requirements against the possibility of sponsorship, at a diplomatic cost, by a major 'donor' power."[23]

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[21] Andrew F. Cooper, Richard A. Higgott, and Kim Richard Nossal, Relocating Middle Powers: Australia and Canada in a Changing World Order, Vancouver, Melbourne University Press, 1993. Olav F. Knudsen (ed.), Strategic Analysis and the Management of Power, Johan Jorgen Holst, the Coldwar and the New Europe, New York, MacMillan, 1996. See also W.W. Rostow, The United States and the Regional Organization of Asia and the Pacific, 1965-1985, Austin, University of Texas Press, 1986.

[22] Robert W. Cox & Timothy J. Sinclair, Approaches to World Order, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1996. p241.

[23] R.P. Barston, Modern Diplomacy: second edition. p302.

Thus, middle powers are further differentiated from small powers in terms of their capacity to consistently play a more significant role in international diplomacy. This is not due to any qualitative advantages (such as the intrinsic and superior quality of diplomats representing middle powers) possessed by the former but to the fact that middle powers have the capacity to devote superior and quantifiable resources to diplomacy.

In a speech that gave an indication of Australia's self-perception as a middle power, Francis Forde, former deputy Prime Minister of Australia states:

> "It will have to be recognized that outside the great powers there are certain powers who, by reason of their resources and their geographical location, will have to be relied upon especially for the maintenance of peace and security in various quarters of the world."[24]

To Forde, a middle power occupies a special niche in general state system, and the disparity between small and middle powers meant that middle powers might adopt the role of a hegemon within their geographic region in the absence, or with the acquiescence, of a great power. Forde's perception of Australia's role in international relations reiterates some of the key themes of the structuralist perspective of middle powers. The first is that structuralist perspectives are to some extent relational. They assume that the role of a middle power is contingent upon its power relative to other states engaged within its sphere of activity.[25] The second is that the role of a middle power, like Australia, is based on its ability to support the interests of great powers (such as Great Britain and the United States) and to exercise influence in the context of its special relationship with, and access to, these powers. Thus, it is with these assumptions in mind that Forde was able to assert that, as a consequence of its

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[24] Forde cited in Carsten Holbraad, Middle Powers In International Politics. p61.

"resources and its geographical location", Australia can "be relied upon" to play a role in "the maintenance of peace and security" in its corner of the world.

The physical attributes of a state and its geography have emerged as two factors that can be regarded as defining characteristics of middle powers from the structuralist perspective. The physical attributes of middle powers provide them with the capacity to play a role in international relations that lies beyond the reach of small powers, and from which great powers are, by their very nature, disqualified. Whereas geography is significant in that it helps to define the extent to which middle powers have a significant role in international affairs, as well as represent the spatial context wherein their primary interests lay or to which they are limited.

Process Oriented Perspectives Of Middle Powers

The end of the Cold War and the increasing use of multilateral institutional arrangements in the contemporary state system prompted a significant change of focus in the study of middle powers. The growing economic interdependence of sovereign states and other changes in the modern world brought fresh interpretations of inter-state relations. Scholars and policy makers began to review other avenues of middle power influence in international relations with much greater interest in non force-oriented perspectives of international relations.[26] The broadening base of issues affecting inter-state relations, constraints on the use of force, and other factors in the contemporary state system resulted in an increasing number of multilateral institutional arrangements, which emerged as responses to these concerns. These

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[25] Hans J. Morgenthau, Politics Among Nations: The Struggle for Power and Peace (fifth edition). pp153-155

responses include the multilateral attempts to address global and transboundary issues such as economic interdependence, pollution, resource depletion, the hole in the ozone layer, and other concerns that threatened the national interests of modern states, though not necessarily their territorial integrity, through international institutional arrangements.

The academic interest, especially in Australia, with respect to a role for middle powers that is oriented towards multilateralism and institution building in international relations has also been strong. In Australia, this was probably due in part to a government that was ideologically predisposed towards multilateralism, as well as a foreign minister that was extremely active in international diplomacy and in promoting a strong role for Australia in international multilateral arrangements.[27] However, the interest in the study of middle power diplomacy might also simply be a reflection of the contemporary and general academic interest in the significance of multilateral institutional arrangements for modern theories of international relations.[28]

Structuralist perspectives of the role that middle powers played in international relations tend to be informed by Realism, while process oriented perspectives are more inclined to be guided by Rationalist or Neoliberalist assumptions. These schools of thought attempt to account for the role of institutional arrangements in international relations without discounting the significance of state power. While

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[26] Paul Keating, Australia, Asia and the New Regionalism, Singapore, Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 1996. p16.

[27] Gareth Evans was the Foreign Minister, in a Labor government that was in office from 1983 to 1996. See Richard Leaver and Dave Cox, 'Introduction: the world according to Gar', in Middling, Meddling, Muddling: Issues in Australian Foreign Policy, Richard Leaver and Dave Cox (eds.), Sydney, Allen & Unwin, 1997.

[28] There has been considerable activity with regard to multilateral institutional arrangements in the past decade. The more notable events of international diplomacy in which Australia was involved included

they disagree on the inevitability of conflict as the basic tenet of international relations, they both share the view that the contemporary state system, as well as the dynamics that govern inter-state relations, is guided by rules as well as by power. In the case of the Neorealists, rules established by multilateral institutional arrangements are constructed to impose, or resist, a hegemonic order, and the focus of study is to discover how this is achieved.[29] Rationalists and Neoliberalists tend to regard multilateral institutional arrangements as contractual arrangements made voluntarily to defend egotistical state interests, which may or may not have anything to do with the ambition to achieve ascendancy or hegemony over other states.[30] Instead, their emphasis is on discovering the gains that prompt egotistical states to voluntarily agree to such multilateral arrangements in the first instance, and the factors that hinder or facilitate this process.

Process oriented perspectives of middle powers focus predominantly on the role of middle powers in multilateral arrangements. The proliferation of multilateral institutional arrangements in the contemporary state system provides an additional impetus for studies on how states may defend their interests within an adversarial state system from a non force-oriented perspective. These studies include the work of Keohane and Nye, which advanced the hypothesis that sovereign states may exist in a state of complex interdependence within the context of a global economic framework, and may be driven by non-military imperatives in their relationship with

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the negotiation (and the coming into force) of the United Nations Law of the Sea and the World Trade Organisation, and the role played by the United Nations in the Cambodian elections and the Gulf War.

[29] See the previous chapter for a more detailed discussion of the contending arguments from the Neorealist and Neoliberalist interpretations on the relationship between states, multilateral institutional arrangements and the state system.

[30] Rationalists and Neoliberalists are also prepared to go beyond a state-centric view of international relations, and consider the possibility that multilateral institutional arrangements might become more than instruments or arenas, and assume the role of actors in some circumstances.

one another.[31] Studies from a non force-oriented perspective of how states have defended their interests within the state system include the observations of Biliana Cincin-Sain & Robert W. Knecht on the non-traditional coalitions established during the negotiations at the United Nations Convention for the Law of the Sea.[32] Oran Young also investigated the tactics employed by "entrepreneurial states" in the creation of environmental regimes and how some states have been able to exploit multilateral institutional arrangements to defend their interests.[33] These perspectives are premised on the assumption that states can defend their interests vis-à-vis other states, and/or bring about desired outcomes in international relations, through multilateral institutional arrangements, and that the exercise of influence within such arrangements is not necessarily determined by traditional Realist assumptions about power. While many of these studies do not address the role of middle powers specifically, non force-oriented perspectives provide an alternative context within which the role of states, including middle powers, in international relations can be explored. In particular, non force-oriented perspectives suggest that the role of middle powers can be better appreciated by investigating the manner in which they engaged in regime creation, and/or exploited the opportunities offered by participation in multilateral institutional arrangements, to defend their interests.

In this context, Robert Cox proposes a "behavioral test of *middlepowermanship*", where middle powers are defined by their affinity for, and ability to exploit multilateral institutional arrangements in international relations. This approach provides a useful alternative to the focus adopted by Wight and other Realist inspired

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[31] Robert Owen Keohane & Jospeh S. Nye, Power and Interdependence, (second edition), U.S., Harper Collins, 1989.

[32] Biliana Cincin-Sain & Robert W. Knecht, 'Implications of the Earth Summit for Ocean and Coastal Governance', in Ocean Development And International Law, Volume 24, Number 4, October - December 1993.

scholars.[34] The underlying premise is that middle powers will, by their very nature, have a vested interest in multilateral institutional arrangements, and therefore, they can be defined by their commitment to, as well as by the leadership role that they assume in, such arrangements. Nossal, who is one of the adherents to a non force-oriented perspective of middle powers, explains that:

> "Middle powers have an abiding preference for multilateralism rather than bilateral approaches to statecraft. Such an attachment is driven by the middling size and capacity of these states. Their relative lack of capacity encourages a belief that international problems and conflicts of interest between sovereign states are best solved within the context of multilateral negotiations. Middle power diplomacy is guided by a belief that given the degree of contemporary interdependence, strictly bilateral dealings are a less effective, and often ineffective, means of resolving international disputes. Moreover, bilateral arrangements do not promote global norms as effectively as those arrived at through multilateral negotiations."[35]

Therefore, while Realists continue to maintain that a state's military power is the primary determinant of its position within the international order, process oriented perspectives have expanded the concept of power to include non-military considerations and the ability to wield influence within the framework of multilateral institutional arrangements.

A similar approach to that of Cox is advanced by the Canadian, Lester Pearson to identify the role of middle powers in international relations. Pearson argues:

> "... that middle powers were always more likely to exhibit an unusual degree of international civic virtue. This is because they have *insufficient* power to generate the worldwide interests and

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[33] Oran Young, International Cooperation: Building Regimes for Natural Resources and the Environment, Ithaca, Cornell University Press, 1989.
[34] Robert Cox & Timothy J. Sinclair, '*Middlepowermanship*, Japan, and future world order', in Approaches to World Order, Robert Cox & Timothy J. Sinclair (eds.), Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1996. p252.
[35] Kim Richard Nossal, 'Middle Power Diplomacy in the Changing Asia-Pacific Order: Australia and Canada Compared'. p215.

> client regimes which make great powers partisan for one side or another in regional conflicts ... At the same time, however, middle powers have *sufficient* power to enable them to make a worthwhile contribution to the implementation of policies determined by global consensus through such bodies as the UN."[36]

Cooper, Higgot and Nossal also employ a similar method to investigate the role that Australia and Canada assume as middle powers in the general state system.[37] Like Cox and Pearson, Cooper, Higgot and Nossal focused on Australian and Canadian initiatives in the development and exploitation of multilateral institutional arrangements, and concluded that a middle power can be defined by the leadership role that it adopts in such arrangements. Indeed, support for the process of institution building is regarded by some as an end in itself, and not simply a means to an egotistical end, such as defending narrowly defined state interests. Cox suggests that:

> "In modern times, the middle-power role, ... has become linked to the development of international organization. International organization is a process, not a finality; and international law is one of its important products. The middle power's interest is to support this process, whether in the context of hegemonic order or (even more vitally) in the absence of hegemony."[38]

Therefore, the theme that middle powers have a vested interest in promoting multilateralism and multilateral institutional arrangements in international relations, as well as the capacity to defend their interests through both, is strongly reiterated in the literature.

The process oriented perspectives of international relations challenge the realist argument that only great powers have significant and active roles within the state system, whereas 'lesser' powers can only react to the machinations of, and/or endure

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[36] G.R. Berridge, International Politics: States, Power & Conflict Since 1945, New York, Prentice Hall, 1997. p18.
[37] Andrew F. Cooper, Richard A. Higgott, and Kim Richard Nossal, Relocating Middle Powers: Australia and Canada in a Changing World Order.

as best they can under international arrangements created by, the great powers. The studies of international relations from a non force-oriented perspective emphasise the role of multilateral institutional arrangements in the state system, and in doing so, they infer a larger role for middle powers in the contemporary international society. To process oriented authors, the role of a state within the state system rests not merely on the question of how big or sharp a sword it possesses but is also determined by how skillfully it is able to exploit other instruments of influence, especially multilateral institutional arrangements. In short, while force-oriented perspectives define middle powers as powers that are capable of asserting themselves in a manner akin to a great power within their geographic region, non force-oriented perspectives suggest a different approach towards conceptualising middle powers. In process oriented perspectives, middle powers are regarded as states with the capacity to defend their interests successfully in international relations because of their leadership role in 'entrepreneurial activity', which allows them to create opportunities for influence through multilateral institutional arrangements in the state system. It is the emphasis on this entrepreneurial spirit towards diplomacy, rather than their military superiority over weaker states within their geographic region, that characterise the study of middle powers in process oriented perspectives.

Definitional Difficulties With The Concept Of Middle Powers

Structuralist and process oriented perspectives of international relations highlight definitive traits in states or state behaviour that can serve as nominal definitions for a middle power. However, these nominal definitions are contingent upon the

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[38] Robert Cox & Timothy J. Sinclair, Approaches to World Order. p243.

theoretical frameworks from which they are derived and this raises questions of definitional ambiguity. In particular, the limitations of the nominal definitions become evident when they are tested against empirical examples.

One of the major problems with structuralist inspired definitions of a middle power is the difficulty of constructing an exhaustive and exclusive schema that accounts for all the potential physical characteristics of a state relevant to the measurement of power and quantifies them appropriately.[39] Soedjatmoko points out that,

> "Except for states on the two extremes of the spectrum, the super-powers and the mini-states, the quantifiable criteria that some political taxonomists have used, like size of population, GNP, level of industrialisation, size of the armed forces and combinations thereof, have proved to be quite unsatisfactory."[40]

The difficulties and limitations of constructing a quantitative measure to define a middle power are highlighted by the fact that small well-trained armies with technologically advanced weapons can be more than a match for large, but less well-equipped armies. Nor is it be simple (or possible?) to quantify such characteristics as the tactical ability of military commanders, or the diplomatic and/or personal influence of a King Hussein, Gareth Evans, the Dalai Lama or Lee Kuan Yew.

The nominal definitions of a middle power from structuralist perspectives also suffer from the fact that they are largely based on static assessments of the power of states. Therefore, they fail to adequately account for situational or relational factors that

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[39] Johan Galtung, On the Way to Superpower Status: India and the EC Compared, Indian Ocean Centre For Peace Studies, Occasional Paper No 2, 1991. Harold Sprout & Margaret Sprout, Foundations of International Politics, Princeton, D. Van Nostrand Company, 1962. Hans J. Morgenthau, Politics Among Nations: The Struggle for Power and Peace, (fifth Edition).

[40] Soedjatmoko, 'The role of the Medium and Small Nations in the new Asia-Pacific Setting', in Foreign Policy for Australia: Choices for the Seventies, Proceedings of the 39th Summer School, Australian Institute of Political Science, held at Canberra, 27-29 January 1973, Canberra, Angus and Robertson, 1973. p37

might enhance or diminish the capacity of a state to play a significant role in the state system. Soedjatmoko argues that:

> "Situational factors may also enable small countries to play a much more influential role than can be accounted for by use of single country criteria alone."[41]

In *Power Politics*, Wight describes a middle power in terms of its ability to dominate weaker states within a geographic region. This means that middle powers are defined by their capabilities within a geographic region, where power relative to the other states within the region determines the status of a state as a "regional great power", and within the context of the broader state system as a "middle power". The limitations of an analytical framework based on these premises are obvious. A weak state among states weaker than itself may find itself in the position of a regional great power and thus, a middle power. Whereas, a strong state that shares a geographic region with stronger states may well find itself reduced to the status of a minor power. Thus, while it may be an accurate reflection of the distribution of power within the confines of their respective geographic region, a definition of middle powers based on the concept of relative power is only useful in the appropriate context.

Structuralist perspectives, which equate the power of a state with the interests that it is capable of defending, are based on traditional assumptions of *realpolitik* where power (and technology) determines the scope of interests held by a state. Thus, by definition, great powers are deemed to possess system-wide interests, whereas small powers have limited interests beyond the preservation of their own independence.[42] However, the utility of employing the factor of 'interests' as a point of reference to

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[41] Soedjatmoko, 'The role of the Medium and Small Nations in the new Asia-Pacific Setting'. p37.
[42] Martin Wight, Power Politics. p65

guide the identification of middle powers is challenged by the contemporary experience. While the scope of interests that a state held in international affairs might have corresponded with its status within the international community and served as a useful indicator of its power in an earlier age, this is no longer the case.

In the modern state system, myriad multilateral institutional arrangements offer small states, especially middle powers, the opportunity to play a significant and effective role in many aspects of international relations. Thus, it can be said that there are very few states that "have no interest except the preservation of their independence" in the contemporary state system. Indeed, through the opportunities provided by multilateral institutional arrangements, even the micro-states of the South Pacific have pursued a variety of causes, some of them successfully, at the global level. Sovereign integrity over territorial possessions has become but one of the many concerns of states in the contemporary state system. The broadening perceptions of strategic interests that modern states hold may be seen in the South East Asian concept of 'comprehensive security', which includes economic, social and cultural concerns in addition to the traditional interest in protecting territorial integrity.[43]

The needs and opportunities for modern states to defend a broad span of interests are especially true of middle powers. Nossal observes that middle powers are developing an interest in a growing range of issues, and remarks:

> "Normally, one would expect a small state to confine its interests, and thus its diplomatic activities, to its own geographic region or to its dominant economic relationships; in this view, only great powers have interests that are global in scope. Middle power diplomacy, by contrast, is marked by its extended scope. Middle powers tend to be involved in a wide range of diplomatic matters,

[43] Desmond Ball, Strategic Culture in the Asia-Pacific Region (With Some Implications for Regional Security Cooperation), Canberra, Strategic & Defence Studies Centre, Australian National University, 1993. pp16-18

> usually extending well beyond the regional or functional interests of the state."[44]

Australia is exemplary of this modern archetype of a middle power; one that takes a broad view in its assessment of strategic interests and engaged in pursuing a very wide range of interests in its foreign policy.

Australia possesses the resources to exploit opportunities to defend a comprehensive variety of interests in the contemporary state system, which is characterised by a myriad range of multilateral institutional arrangements ostensibly established to determine outcomes in international affairs. The proliferation of multilateral institutional arrangements in the contemporary state system enables wealthy and technologically advanced middle powers, such as Australia and Canada, to become as well represented as great powers, like the United States, in international forums. While they remain middle powers, they now have the opportunity to defend a wide spectrum of interests, many of which extend well beyond their geographic region, ranging from environmental issues to an international ban on landmines. Therefore, simply defining middle powers in terms of the range of interests pursued by a state or by making a simple distinction between global and regional interests is inaccurate and the usefulness of employing the traditional criteria of 'interests' to identify middle powers needs to be reassessed.

In *Middle Power Diplomacy in the Changing Asia-Pacific Order*, Cooper, Higgott and Nossal chart the processes and leadership roles that Australia and Canada adopted in establishing multilateral institutional arrangements, and explored how these initiatives enabled them to defend their interests in international relations. They

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[44] Kim Richard Nossal, 'Middle Power Diplomacy in the Changing Asia-Pacific Order: Australia and Canada Compared'. p213.

avoid the limitations of a static account of middle powers, often encountered in structuralist perspectives, by adopting a process oriented approach and furnished a guide on the dynamics that characterise middle power diplomacy.[45] However, like structuralist perspectives, process oriented perspectives fail to offer a schema that is both exhaustive and exclusive. Process oriented perspectives identify middle powers by the processes they engaged in and the roles they adopt within the state system. However, this raises other issues.

The focus on the diplomatic activism of middle powers or *middlepowermanship* in multilateral institutional forums fails to address the issue of states that lack the ambition to pursue such a role and states that are not engaged in such processes. Thus, process oriented perspectives are unable to account for powers such as South Africa in the days of apartheid, when South Africa was arguably as well-endowed with resources as Australia, but did not possess commensurate influence in international society. Nor Myanmar, which is arguably "more powerful" than Singapore in terms of resources but possesses significantly less capability to assert any influence within the state system beyond its territorial boundaries. It is therefore obvious that simply identifying middle powers by the activity that they engaged in within the state system would disqualify some states that might otherwise be considered middle powers (or even great powers) simply by virtue of the potential represented by the physical attributes these states possess. It assumes a 'natural' ambition on the part of states to engage in and influence the processes within the state system to the greatest possible extent, commensurate with their physical capability to do so. Whereas history has demonstrated that some states might, regardless of their ability to play a significant role in the state system, be disinclined

[45] Richard A. Higgott, and Kim Richard Nossal, Relocating Middle Powers: Australia and Canada in a Changing World Order.

to act in such a manner. Switzerland, for example, is a state that deliberately chose to assume a low profile in international relations, in spite of its potential influence on the state system. While it is possible to speculate on the potential influence of a state in international relations, this is only possible when adopting a structuralist perspective of state power where power is measured in terms of physical attributes, which a state either possesses, or does not. In contrast, process oriented perspectives are limited by the fact that they can only identify states that have engaged or which actively seek to engage other states in the state system. States that lack the ambition to engage other states or are isolated by other states would remain outside the scope of process oriented perspectives.

The use of *middlepowermanship* as a guide towards identifying middle powers also encounters difficulties in establishing exclusive categories. In spite of their disparity in power and resources, small island states in the South Pacific and large states like Japan may share a similar foreign policy orientation in terms of supporting initiatives for international institutions and relying on multilateral processes to achieve their objectives in international relations. This suggests that there may be limited utility in defining middle powers solely on the basis of how they behave. Small states are driven towards a preference for multilateralism and institutional arrangements in international relations because of their size and capacity. Similarly larger states may express a preference for multilateral approaches because of political culture or other factors, even if their size and innate capabilities suggest that other options are possible (or even more desirable from a *realpolitik* point of view). The concept of powers, great, small, or middle is only helpful if it is possible to usefully differentiate states from one another with these labels. Therefore, the inclusion of some physical

criteria as a basis for the classification of powers appears to be necessary if the definition of middle powers is to remain a useful analytical tool.

In summary, the nominal definitions of a middle power that were canvassed earlier produce a concept of middle power that is plagued with definitional ambiguities. The basic image of a middle power is that it has greater capabilities than those possessed by small powers but less than that of great powers. However, the nature of those capabilities varies in description depending on the writers that examine them. Structuralist perspectives suggest that physical attributes are the primary determinants of the role that states can expect to play in international relations. In contrast, process oriented perspectives suggest that the contemporary state system offers smaller states opportunities, in the form of international multilateral institutional arrangements, to overcome the traditional limits that constrain their ability to defend a broad range of interests. A few reservations about whether these perspectives offer an exclusive or exhaustive guide to understanding middle powers remain. Nevertheless, the notion that middle powers might have predictable inclinations within the state system, as a consequence of the level of power they possess, or their capacity to seize the opportunities for influence that arise, or both, provides a useful platform from which to explore their role in international relations.

Towards A Framework For The Identification of Middle Powers

The foregoing discussion highlights some of the ambiguities presented by the nominal definitions of a middle power in the literature. While consistent within their respective theoretical frameworks, structuralist and process oriented perspectives fail

to address issues that fall outside the ambit of their respective theoretical assumptions of middle powers. This thesis explores the factors that represent a consistent and effective means through which a middle power like Australia is able to manifest its influence within its geographic region. However, in order to arrive at an objective assessment, it is necessary to first develop a working definition for middle powers that would not preclude the investigation of factors that lie outside the ambit of either structuralist or process oriented perspectives of middle powers. Fortunately, the preceding examination of the nominal definitions of middle powers has thrown out a few common themes that can provide useful guidelines for the purposes of this thesis.

One common theme that has emerged in the discussion of structuralist and process oriented perspectives is that a state should at least possess the capacity to exercise significant influence over developments within a limited sphere of international activity before it is considered as a middle power. For those who adhere to structuralist perspectives, this is manifested in the capacity of a middle power to assume a hegemonic role within its geographic region or in its capacity to play an influential role in a system where there is a balance of power between great powers. For process oriented scholars, the influence of middle powers is manifested through their role in multilateral institutional arrangements, which is not necessarily confined by the geographic parameters that usually apply within structuralist perspectives but is shaped by the nature and scope of such arrangements. Thus, the literature produced by both structuralist and process oriented perspectives sketch an image that is recognisably similar. Like great powers, a middle power is able to play a significant role in international relations as an egotistical state in defence of its interests.

However, unlike great powers, the influence and interests of a middle power are limited to specific issues or specific geographic regions or both.

While the broadly defined concept of a middle power as a state that wields 'significant influence' within specific issue areas, or geographic regions, or both, in international relations provides a useful starting point for a working definition, the adjective 'significant' remains ambiguous. Influence can be proved (or disproved) by demonstrating the capacity to alter the decisions, actions, or opinions of another. However, the standard for 'significance' is inevitably subjective. It would be fair to say that all states exercise some influence over their environment in the state system to some degree. Therefore, at what point does this influence become 'significant'? The key issue lies in the benchmarks used to determine the level of influence. Thus, there is a need to establish the point at which influence over developments in the state system can be deemed significant, and yet fall short of the mark by which great powers are defined. For scholars like Wight, the 'significant influence' manifested by a middle power can be identified by its ability to assume a hegemonic role within the context of a regional sub-set of the general state system.[46] In contrast, the work of other scholars, such as Cooper, Higgot and Nossal, suggest that middle powers demonstrate 'significant influence' in international relations through a leadership role in agenda setting for multilateral initiatives.[47] At best, any attempt to establish the point at which influence becomes 'significant' is likely to be based on an arbitrary standard. Therefore, for the purposes of this thesis, the presence of 'significant influence' is assumed if a middle power can demonstrate a sustainable capacity to influence outcomes within a specific sphere of international activity.

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[46] Martin Wight, Power Politics. p63.

Another common theme found in both structuralist and process oriented perspectives of middle powers is the assumption of 'ambition' on the part of the state. For the purposes of this thesis, 'ambition' is defined as the aspiration, desire, or inclination of a state to engage other states within the context of the state system in order to influence developments in international relations and defend its own interests. As middle powers are defined by their ability to exercise significant influence within limited spheres of international relations, absence of ambition on the part of a potential middle power to exercise its potential influence would make the discussion irrelevant. The term, or even the concept of, 'ambition' is not explicit in the literature but it does clearly affect the manner in which structuralist perspectives are applied to the concept of middle power and may be regarded as a necessary condition for process oriented perspectives.

Within structuralist perspectives, the 'ambition' of a state to engage other states in the state system in order to achieve influence within the latter tends to be ignored as irrelevant. Instead, the focus of structuralist perspectives tends to be on the attributes representing the potential of a state for influence. There is an implicit assumption in some structuralist perspectives that, where possible, states will always seek to exploit their potential for influence. Whether states do so is not the issue, the fact that they do possess the potential to do so is. However, while we can speculate about a 'hermit nations' potential for regional or global influence, such speculation would be directed at how other states respond to the potential of this passive state, as opposed to how the latter translates its potential into political influence within the state system. For the purposes of this thesis, the utility of such an exercise would be limited. Nevertheless, although the factor of ambition is absent in structuralist

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[47] Richard A. Higgott, & Kim Richard Nossal, Relocating Middle Powers: Australia and Canada in a Changing World Order.

perspectives, the issue of ambition can still provide the context for a discussion on the circumstances that might lead a state with the potential for significant influence to change its attitude about a more active role in international relations.

Within process oriented perspectives of a middle power, 'ambition' represents a necessary condition. The arguments from process oriented perspectives are based on the notion that states can exploit institutional processes within the state system to defend their interests. Therefore, as the ability to achieve influence is contingent upon participation, it is clear that the underlying premise of such arguments is that states must possess the ambition to engage in or are already participating in such processes. As with structuralist perspectives of middle powers, it is possible to consider the 'what if's', and explore the possibility that a 'hermit state' might chose to pursue a role consistent with that suggested by the process oriented perspectives. However, querying whether a state, which has not demonstrated the ambition to do so, can or will successfully adopt such a role, while offering some useful insight, is likely to be a purely speculative exercise. Moreover, any attempt to pursue this line of questioning will probably meet with the same difficulties encountered in structuralist perspectives, and that is the difficulty of identifying the relevant variables in a dynamic environment, and then being able to quantify those variables. In contrast, the assumption of ambition in states provides a reference point for process oriented perspectives that can be applied to empirical evidence in order to assess their success or failure in achieving influence, as well as the reasons for either outcome.

In applying the criteria of ambition and capacity for significant influence in international relations to the identification of middle powers, a simple and ideal type for middle powers is established. This may be represented in the following schema.

Middle Power Wannabe	**Middle Power**
Ambition No Capacity	Ambition Capacity
Not A Middle Power	**Potential Middle Power**
No Ambition No Capacity	No Ambition Capacity

The absence of the capacity to assume significant influence prevents a state from claiming middle power status, even where there is an ambition to do so. In contrast, the capacity to claim influence without a corresponding ambition to do so simply suggests a middle power in *potentia* and not a middle power *per se*. Thus, ambition and capacity encapsulate the key elements that may be used to define a state as a middle power.

In short, the preceding review of middle powers from perspectives described as structuralist and process oriented suggests that there are many factors that go into defining a middle power. A closer examination of the nominal definitions of a middle power reveals that while applicable within their respective theoretical frameworks, these factors result in definitional ambiguity when exposed to situations outside the ambit of those frameworks. To investigate middle power influence within its geographic environment, and to do so without precluding the insights from either

the structuralist or process oriented perspectives, it is necessary to distil the diverse premises about middle powers from both these perspectives into a broader and more operationally-based definition applicable to both. Thus, the capacity to exercise significant influence over developments within a limited sphere of international activity, as well as the ambition to do so, are identified as common themes that may be used as generic benchmarks in this thesis to identify a middle power.

Strategies To Assess The Regional Influence Of Middle Powers

The previous section established a generic framework for the identification of middle powers that would encompass both structuralist and process oriented perspectives. This section addresses some of the questions that arise from the construction of that framework. In applying the above framework to test the claim of a state to middle power status in a geographic region, the ambition and capacity of that state to exercise significant influence over developments within that region are examined. However, several other issues will inevitably be queried along with the above, including the interests that inspire an ambition for influence, the strategies that may be pursued to defend those interests and the resources that can be employed to successfully achieve those strategies.

The question of whether a state possesses the ambition to assume a role of influence within its region might be a simple 'yes' or 'no'. However, the process of determining the reason for that answer provides an insight into the attitude of that state towards foreign policy, and perhaps more significant, its perception of its own regional interests. The lack of ambition to pursue regional influence might be due to

inadequate resources, more urgent priorities demanding limited resources in other regions, doubts about its chances for success, a lack of interest, or other factors. Whereas, the ambition to pursue regional influence might be due to the perception that there are specific strategic, economic or other interests in the region that must be defended or the belief that doing so serves a broader national interest. Regardless, the investigation of the presence or absence of ambition for regional influence guides the discussion towards a review of the interests or other issues that would lead a state to engage or abstain from pursuing regional influence.

Similarly, the question of whether a state possesses the capacity to assume a role of regional influence opens up the discussion for a more thorough examination and understanding of middle powers. In addition to the obvious question of whether the capacity for influence exists, it also leads the way for the investigation into what brings about this capacity, and how this is translated into influence.

The review of a state's capacity for influence in its region establishes not only the extent of its own resources but also benchmarks this against the existing influence or potential for influence possessed by other states within the region. The importance of a multidimensional approach towards the analysis of power/influence is emphasised by Susan Strange when she states:

> "I believe that the distinction has to be made between relational and structural power. Others have further distinguished coercive power from bargaining power and from the persuasive power of ideological dominance. These are all useful aids to thinking about power."[48]

[48] Susan Strange, 'Territory, State, Authority and Economy: A New Realist Outology of Global Political Economy', in The New Realism: Perspectives on Multilateralism and the World Order, Robert W. Cox (ed.), Tokyo, United Nations University Press, 1997. pp5-6.

Thus, structuralist perspectives on the significance of power and relative power are given consideration and the applicability of such arguments within the regions surveyed in this thesis is weighed. The presence of multilateral institutional arrangements in, as well as the significance of these arrangements to, a geographic region is also examined. This thesis provides an opportunity to test the relevance of process oriented perspectives by exploring the capacity of a state to influence regional developments through the multilateral institutional arrangements in the regions surveyed. Finally, any evidence of factors that fall outside the expectations of either the structuralist or the process oriented perspectives but which provide a state with the capacity to assume a role of significant influence in its region is also likely to be revealed.

The investigation of how a middle power is able to manifest significant influence follows on from the discussion on what provides it with the capacity to do so. Empirical evidence of 'significant influence' manifested by the state under scrutiny is reviewed. The examination of how a state is able to exercise 'significant influence' in its geographic region clarifies many issues. It offers insight into the regional role of the state being studied, as well as how it has translated, or may translate, its resources and other political assets into regional influence. In particular, it would be instructive to study the preferences of a middle power in situations where it has the capacity to pursue a variety of options in foreign policy. An analysis of why some policy options inspired by structuralist perspectives are preferred to those from process oriented perspectives, or *vice versa*, furthers our understanding of how a middle power might perceive itself and its role in international relations. It may also suggest possible trends within the general state system thereby lending greater weight to one or the other of the theories advanced on middle powers.

In summary, the review of the role of a middle power in its geographic region can be organised in terms of an investigation into its ambition for influence, its capacity for influence, and the manner in which it has demonstrated its influence, in regional affairs. Thus, the investigation into the role of a middle power, like Australia', within its regional environment can be represented by the following template.

	South Pacific region	Antarctic region	South East Asian region	Indian Ocean region
Ambition				
Capacity				

Capacity For Influence Based On:

Physical Attributes				
Institutional Arrangements				
Other factors				

This template will be applied to the subsequent chapters in order to provide a consistent and useful guide for discussion. As with most, if not all, social science models, it is unlikely that this model would provide a guide of absolute certainty or supply a correlation that would prove infallible or constant. However, it might offer a guide to the tendency of one factor over others to represent the basis of middle power influence in the contemporary state system and to offer reasons on why this is so.

Conclusion

This chapter has reviewed the nominal definitions of middle powers found in the literature on international relations. It has observed that the capacity of middle

powers to exercise influence in international relations has in the main been attributed to their possession of certain physical attributes. The ability of middle powers to exploit opportunities furnished by situational factors, such as history, the dynamics of the Cold War and changes in international attitudes on various issues is also noted. Thus, it has been proposed that a concept of middle powers can be organised in terms of either structuralist or process oriented perspectives. The structuralist perspectives tend to explain the concept of a middle power in terms of structural hierarchies derived from Realist premises about the role of power within the state system. Within structuralist perspectives, states are ranked in a hierarchy of power and middle powers are deemed to be those states that fall between the upper and the lower ends of the scale. In contrast, the process oriented perspectives look at middle powers in terms of their role in international relations, and in particular, their ability to assume a leadership role in, and support for, multilateral institutional arrangements within the state system. Process oriented perspectives tend to be based on the premise that multilateral institutional arrangements represent non force oriented mechanisms that enterprising states can exploit to influence developments in the state system, and that middle powers are characterised by their enthusiasm for, and leadership role in, such arrangements.

This chapter has also addressed the definitional ambiguities of the nominal definitions canvassed. It argues that the nominal definitions of middle power that stem from structuralist and process oriented perspectives are not fully satisfactory. And that while these nominal definitions are consistent within the ideal type established by their respective theoretical frameworks, the limitations of these nominal definitions of middle powers are exposed when challenged empirically. Consequently, neither suffices as an all-embracing definition for middle powers in

practice, but rather, each of these nominal definitions have to be applied in the context of their respective theoretical assumptions.

This thesis seeks to explore the various mechanisms through which a middle power, like Australia, manifests its influence and defends its interest, within its geographic region. However, adopting a nominal definition of middle power from either the structuralist or nominal perspectives would confine the scope of discussion within the parameters of their respective theoretical assumptions. An analytical framework based on a broader definition of middle powers, which is capable of providing a context for discussion and includes insights from both structuralist and process oriented perspectives, would be more useful. Therefore, to address the shortcomings of the nominal definitions and to develop a working definition of middle power that is applicable in a wider variety of circumstances, the nominal definitions are distilled to a generic definition that encompasses both structuralist and process oriented perspectives of middle powers. Two benchmarks, the ambition to exercise significant influence within a limited sphere of international activity and the capacity to do so, are advanced as characteristic traits of middle powers. These benchmarks, in turn, provide reference points for a more thorough investigation into the role of middle powers. In particular, they supply the context for the analysis, in subsequent chapters, of Australia's interests within the regions surveyed, as well as the means by which it may defend those interests and achieve the 'significant influence' upon which its role as a middle power is founded.

CHAPTER 3

> "There are clear limits to our defence capacity and influence. We are a large country with a small population and industrial base. We are remote from traditional allies and from situations that are important to them. These are factors that, on balance, favour our security. But they also impose considerable constraints through our ability to influence events through our defence activity." – Paul Dibb[1]

Introduction

The previous chapter examined the concept of a 'middle power'. This chapter applies that analysis of the basic concept to Australia's perceptions of itself as a middle power and its role within the state system. The reasons why Australia is commonly described as a middle power are explored and it shall be demonstrated that Australia satisfies all the basic criteria that have traditionally defined middle powers. Towards this end, the template developed in the previous chapter will guide the general discussion on Australia's role as a middle power in this chapter. In the previous chapter, two factors had been identified as key indicators that can be used to define a middle power. A state is a middle power if it has the capacity to assume a role of significant influence in international relations and the ambition to do so. These factors guide the general discussion in this chapter on Australia's perceptions about

[1] Paul Dibb, Review Of Australia's Defence Capabilities: Report To Minister For Defence, Canberra, Australian Government Publishing Service, 1986. p42.

itself as a middle power and the broad strategies that it has applied to the conduct of foreign policy.

Two different perspectives have dominated the domestic discourse in Australia on the strategies that Australia should adopt in international relations and on the appropriate role for a middle power in world affairs. These two perspectives have guided the conduct of Australian foreign policy and may be termed the Conservative and Labor traditions. While adherents to these two perspectives disagree on how Australia can best defend its interests as a middle power, it shall be demonstrated that they have exhibited both an ambition for Australia to assume an influential role in international relations and a belief in its capacity to do so successfully. The Conservative strategy trades upon Australia's resources as a middle power to play an effective role as a valued 'loyal lieutenant' of great powers.[2] It argues that influence in international relations is most effectively derived from Australia's ability to gain the ear of a powerful friend, as well as from the privilege of being included in the councils of the great as a valued ally. In contrast, the Labor strategy is premised upon Australia's ability as a middle power to build coalitions of the like-minded and argues that Australian interests are more effectively defended through entrepreneurial diplomacy and influence in multilateral institutional arrangements.

These differing outlooks on the appropriate role for Australia as a middle power might, *prima facie*, suggest a schizophrenic approach to foreign policy. However, it is argued that this is not the case and that there are common themes that underpin Australian foreign policy. It is argued that, notwithstanding the two distinctive strands in Australian foreign policy, Australia's role as a middle power within its

[2] The term 'loyal lieutenant' was introduced by A/Professor Richard Herr, who used it, in lectures and in conversation with the author of this thesis, to describe Australia's relationship with great powers.

regional environment could be characterised by its ability to influence developments through multilateral institutional arrangements. Thus, while these two perspectives differ on the value of multilateral institutional arrangements, as well as on the extent to which a regional orientation should guide Australian foreign policy, the disagreement tends to be one of emphasis rather than on the fundamental premises concerning Australia's role as a middle power. It will be demonstrated that even though the Conservative approach appears preoccupied with issues of global security and the system-wide interests of its great power allies, it acknowledges the primacy of Australia's regional responsibilities. Indeed, the Conservative approach is premised upon Australia's capacity to defend the interests of its allies, as well as its own, within Australia's geographic region. The recent geo-political changes following the end of the Cold War has also undermined many of the basic premises underlying the Conservative strategy, thereby leading to even greater common ground in Australian foreign policy. Thus, it is proposed that the Conservative and Labor traditions in foreign policy have both demonstrated an ambition to command influence in international affairs, a belief in Australia's ability to do so, and a regional focus in articulating Australia's role as a middle power.

Australia as a Middle Power

Australia satisfies many, if not all, of the criteria listed as defining traits of a middle power by the mainstream perspectives described in the previous chapter. Australia has a small population but it exercises jurisdiction over an enormous territory and vast amounts of natural resources in comparison with other states. While Australia's military and diplomatic capabilities are less than those possessed by a few powerful

states within the general state system, they are equal or superior to many states, including those within its geographic region. Australia's presence on the global stage has been manifested in its achievements in culture, sport and technology, which are significant, even if they are not dominant. Therefore, based on the attributes it possesses, Australia is usually situated somewhere in the middle of the structuralist-inspired schedules that purport to measure the relative power of states in the state system.[3]

Writers examining the structure of international relations during the Cold War have also positioned Australia as a middle power, "a state physically located 'in the middle' between the system's great powers."[4] In terms of Realist perceptions of power, Australia is usually placed 'in the middle' between great powers with large armies and weapons of mass destruction at their disposal, and small powers whose military capabilities might be capable of dealing with civil unrest but little more. In a sense, Australia may have been regarded as the last Western outpost, geographically and strategically poised at the frontier between the communist powers, the Soviet Union, China and Vietnam, and the United States and the rest of the Western world (east of Australia). Such perspectives of a great divide in international relations were prevalent during the Cold War and may retain some residual influence. Such geopolitical structural perspectives might well remain relevant, especially as the next millennium might see Australia politically, economically, and physically located between China or Japan, the ascendant great powers, and the United States, the surviving superpower.[5] However, such visions of dichotomous future conflict remain

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[3] Please refer to Chapter 1, p38.
[4] Andrew F. Cooper, Richard A. Higgott, & Kim Richard Nossal, Relocating Middle Powers: Australia and Canada in a Changing World Order, Vancouver, Melbourne University Press, 1993. p17
[5] George Friedman, The Coming War with Japan, New York, St Martin's Press, 1991. Jeffrey T. Bergner, The New Superpowers, New York, St Martin's Press, 1991. Samuel P. Huntington, The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order, London, Touchstone, 1998.

speculative, and for the moment, the popular view is that the conduct of international relations is characterised by multipolar interests championed in myriad spheres within the state system.[6]

Multipolar interests and multiple arenas for the defence of those interests have been touted as attributes of the contemporary state system and they provide an important context for the characterisation of Australia as a middle power. Australia is very active in the sort of diplomacy described as *middlepowermanship* by process-oriented scholars and which they claim is definitive of the role assumed by middle powers in international relations. In particular, scholars such as Cooper and Bateman have demonstrated Australia's priorities and leadership in such forms of diplomacy. Cooper, Higgott and Nossal have highlighted Australia's role in coalition building and agenda setting in such initiatives as the Cairns Agreement on Agriculture and the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation summit meetings.[7] Bateman has stressed Australia's interest and endeavours in advocating maritime surveillance regimes and promoting confidence and security building measures within its geographic region.[8] The repeated theme in such scholarly works is the proposition that states like Australia endeavour to pursue their interests through multilateral regimes within the state-system and that they act in a manner consistent with that expected of a middle power when they do so.

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[6] Mohamad Mahathir, 'Beyond Confrontation: The Challenge of Peace in the Pacific', in Peace in the Making: Proceedings of the Third Asia-Pacific Roundtable, Kuala Lumpur, June 16-19, 1989, Rohana Mahmood (ed.), Kuala Lumpur, Institute of Strategic and International Studies, 1991. Defending Australia: Defence White Paper 1994, Canberra, Australian Government Publishing Service, 1994. pp7-11.

[7] Andrew F. Cooper, Richard A. Higgott, & Kim Richard Nossal, Relocating Middle Powers: Australia and Canada in a Changing World Order.

[8] Sam Batemen, ' Strategic Change and Naval Roles', in Strategic Change and Naval Roles: Issues For A Medium Naval Power, Sam Bateman and Dick Sherwood (eds.), Canberra, Strategic and Defence Studies Centre, 1993.

In short, Australia meets the criteria established in various scholarly works as nominal definitions of middle power status.[9] In terms of the benchmarks adopted by the working definition developed in the previous chapter, it is proposed that Australia has both the ambition, as well as the capacity, to exercise significant influence in specific spheres of international activity. Throughout its history, Australia has demonstrated an ambition to play a significant role in international relations. This has been expressed in various ways, from Menzies' determination to be included in the councils of great powers to Evatt's efforts to enlarge the role of international organisations and the influence of minor powers. Australia's ambition to command influence in international relations has been inspired by a variety of reasons, ranging from attempts to assuage anxieties about Australia's vulnerability to external threats to the desire to satisfy grand ideals.[10] It will be demonstrated in the following chapters that Australia's claim to middle power status is validated by the fact that its ambition is often matched by its capacity to satisfy those ambitions. The rest of this chapter discusses the strategies, especially those inspired by Conservative and Labor perspectives, through which Australia's ambition and capacity for influence as a middle power within the state system have been and can be expressed.

Domestic Interpretations Of Australia As A Middle Power

While Australia is generally perceived as a middle power, there have been differing domestic interpretations within Australia about what being a middle power entailed,

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[9] These include Richard A. Higgott, & Kim Richard Nossal, Relocating Middle Powers: Australia and Canada in a Changing World Order & Carsten Holbraad, Middle Powers In International Politics.
[10] Ulrich Ellis, A History Of The Australian Country Party, Melbourne, Melbourne University Press, p262. David Lee, 'Liberal Internationalism and World Organisation', in Evatt to Evans: The Labor Tradition in Australian Foreign Policy, David Lee & Christopher Waters (eds.) Canberra, Allen & Unwin, 1997. p51

especially with regard to the role and policies that should be adopted in international relations. The study of how Australia has interpreted its role as a middle power in international relations can be guided by the concept of 'orientation' in understanding foreign policy. Barston advises that:

> "In considering why states and other entities act in particular kinds of ways, the concept of orientation offers a useful starting point. Orientation can be defined as the pattern of governmental and politically significant private attitudes, actions and transactions, which go to make up the [foreign policy] alignment of a country."[11]

Australian foreign policy has been characterised by two distinct trends, which can be described as the Conservative and the Labor approach to foreign policy.

The Conservative approach tends to regard Australian interests as being best defended by support for Western great powers, as these powers have traditionally championed causes with which Australia has traditionally identified. Thus, energy and initiative are usually directed at maintaining and reinforcing access to these great powers in this foreign policy approach, with a view towards influencing these great powers to act in a fashion that would be beneficial to Australian interests. In contrast, the Labor approach towards foreign policy tends to place greater emphasis on multilateralism and is more assertive, in terms of initiative and participation, in the development of multilateral institutional arrangements within the state system.[12] Therefore, while the Labor approach in foreign relations recognises the importance

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[11] R.P. Barston, Modern Diplomacy, second edition, London, Longman, 1997. p35.

[12] The use of the labels 'Conservative' and 'Labor' are not intended to politicise the discussion. It has been demonstrated that there are many within the Australian Labor Party that might actually hold a 'Conservative' view of foreign policy, and the reverse is probably true of the 'Conservative' parties. However, 'radical' does not really seem to be an apt label for that approach to, and perspective of, foreign relations that has been identified with Labor governments. Thus, the term "Labor tradition" is intended simply to refer to orientation towards international relations that is more enthusiastic about an 'independent' role for Australia, as well as being more eager to initiate, and participate in, multilateral institutional arrangements. Nevertheless, the observation that Liberal-National Coalition governments in Australia tend to be advocates of the "Conservative tradition", whereas Labor governments tend to advocate the 'Labor Tradition', seems valid.

of Australia's bilateral ties with great powers, it also attaches great significance to multilateral structures as vehicles for influence, which provide opportunities for a role that enables Australia to be more independent of its more powerful allies.

These domestic perspectives on the role of Australia as a middle power are not mutually exclusive. Thus, it does not mean that an Australia aligned to the broad interests of its great power allies can not or will not unilaterally pursue an independent line in foreign policy when it is in its interests to do so. Nor is an Australia that enthusiastically and independently defends its interests in multilateral forums unaware of, or unappreciative of its great and powerful friends. Nonetheless, there are significant differences with respect to the underlying premises of these two foreign policy approaches, especially with regard to their respective attitudes towards multilateralism as an instrument of middle power diplomacy, and on the significance of regionalism. This contrast highlights their differing attitudes on the appropriate role for a middle power, such as Australia, in the contemporary state system.

The Conservative Tradition in Australian Foreign Policy

The Conservative orientation towards international relations has provided strong guidance to Australian foreign policy and has been, arguably, the dominant theme in Australian diplomacy for much of its history. The Conservative approach to foreign policy has been shaped by several factors, including Australia's ethnicity and history. The Conservative tradition places great value on Australia's ethnic links with its great power allies. The importance of this relationship is highlighted in a recent White Paper on foreign policy, *In The National Interest*, which reiterates the fact that:

> "its history and culture ... give Australia strong links to Europe and the United States, with which Australia shares important economic and strategic interests."[13]

Thus, the Conservative orientation in foreign policy is partially founded on the belief that, as a middle power, Australia should act in symphony with the more powerful champions of Western interests, not just because they are great powers, but also because of their historical and cultural links with Australia.

The Conservative tradition in Australian foreign policy has its roots in Australian history and an Australian colony that was an integral part of the British Empire. As a British dominion that had drifted - reluctantly - into independence rather than attaining independence through struggle and conflict, there was, for a period, some ambiguity over the independence of Australian foreign policy.

The Statute of Westminster 1931 clearly devolved power for independent decision-making to Australia. However, it was apparent that Australia continued to identity with the interests of Great Britain, and to consider British interests as being largely synonymous with its own for a long time. The words of Menzies in a broadcast to Australians in 1939, at the outbreak of war in Europe, typified such attitudes in Australian foreign policy. In his broadcast, Menzies proclaims:

> "It is my melancholy duty to inform you officially, that in consequence of a persistence by Germany in her invasion of Poland, Great Britain has declared war upon her, *and that as a result Australia is at war'* [italics added]."[14]

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[13] In the National Interest: Australia's Foreign and Trade Policy White Paper, Canberra, Commonwealth of Australia, 1997. piv

[14] Coral Bell, Dependent Ally: A Study in Australian Foreign Policy, Melbourne, Oxford University Press, 1988. p15

There was certainly recognition of Australian interests, as being distinct from British interests on some issues. This was evidenced in the concern over the direct military threat to Australian territory in the Second World War, and the pressure from Australia on Britain to invest greater resources to the defence of South East Asia and Australia. Nonetheless, as Coral Bell argues:

> "The real interest of Menzies's decision, as it affects analysis of Australia's strategic dependency, is its underlining of the point that the Prime Minister of the time could make the assumption that what might be done in London (as a member of the War cabinet) was more vital than what had to be done in Canberra."[15]

Hence, in spite of the fact that Australia was a middle power with considerable military resources of its own, there was a belief that Australia's security and other interests were best served by the presence and protection of a great power ally like Britain within its region.

The Conservative tradition in Australian foreign policy is not simply founded on sentimental attachment or loyalty to great western powers but also on pragmatic realist assessments of power in international relations. It is based on the assumption that small or middle powers do not have the clout required to defend their own interests in a general state system where significant issues affecting international order are determined by great powers. Therefore, in spite of its status as one of the strongest powers in its own region, Australia has traditionally been guided by the Conservative orientation on foreign policy and has sought protection from its great power allies.

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[15] Coral Bell, Dependent Ally: A Study in Australian Foreign Policy. p18

In spite of the occasional assertive posture in foreign policy, the Conservative approach has usually been coloured by a sense of vulnerability emanating from self-perceived limitations of Australia's role as a middle power. The Conservative approach to Australian foreign policy is underpinned by the premise that Australia might be unable to defend itself without help from a great power but that a regional security regime might be inadequate. In 1947, the Australian Joint Intelligence Committee Appreciation voiced some of the perennial concerns driving the Conservative agenda in foreign policy. A report from that committee states:

> "Australia is an isolated small Power with limited manpower and resources. She is not able to defend herself unaided against a major Power. While the United Nations remains in being, there is no threat from a minor Power to Australia's security, but whilst the power of the veto exists, it would appear that the United Nations does not offer security against aggression by a major Power."[16]

Thus, the Conservative strategy was driven in part by a sense of vulnerability as a Western settlement in a region overwhelmingly populated by Asians,[17] and in part by a sense of scepticism towards the effectiveness of regional collective security arrangements. These views were recapitulated during the Cold War when Hedley Bull argued that:

> "The first point to make is that none of these countries [in Australia's region] is in a position to make a very significant contribution to Australia's security. Commitments which we enter into with any of them represent, from our point of view, a net liability and not an asset. Regional involvement therefore cannot represent a basis for Australia's foreign policy. At best it can serve to supplement a policy whose foundations lie elsewhere."[18]

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[16] Joint Intelligence Committee Appreciation 1/47, Melbourne 27 March 1947, Appreciation of Certain Aspects of the Strategic Position of Australia, cited in Documents on Australian Foreign Policy 1937-49, Volume XII: 1947, W.J. Hudson & Wendy Way (eds.), Canberra, Australian Government Publishing Service, 1995. p290.

[17] The term 'isolated' could only have been made in reference to Western powers because Australia has always had the company of Asian powers in its region.

These concerns about the inadequacy of any other foreign policy approach reiterate the sense of vulnerability that underpins the Conservative tradition in foreign policy.

In contrast, support for and protection from a great power was a familiar strategy that had worked well for Australia. Thus, looking back at Australia's 'traditional' security arrangements during the Cold War, Bull pointed out that:

> "Reliance on the United States, as the lynch-pin of Australia's security, has provided the basis of our foreign policy for thirty years, and is rooted in the experiences of 1942. The argument for it has been that Australia could once again become the subject of threats which only America can meet; that we should therefore do our utmost to ensure that if such threats arise again, America will be willing to protect us again; and that this object can best be served by what Bruce Grant has called "loyalty to the protector."[19]

Therefore, much of the energy and initiative of the Conservative foreign policy approach is invested in maintaining access to and influence with a great power that would serve as Australia's protector.[20] Guided by the Conservative approach, Australian foreign policy was to, first, emphasise loyalty as dominion of the British Empire, and support for British interests. And subsequently, when Britain declined as a global military power, Australia sought to ensure America's commitment to Australia and Australia's region by becoming a loyal ally of the United States.[21] The Realist assumptions in Australia's search for a new patron were summed up succinctly in the words of a Canadian diplomat, who declared that "*pax americana* is

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[18] Hedley Bull, 'Options for Australia', in Foreign Policy for Australia: Choices for the Seventies, Proceedings of the 39th Summer School, Australian Institute of Political Science, held at Canberra, 27-29 January 1973, Canberra, Angus and Robertson, 1973. p148.
[19] Hedley Bull, 'Options for Australia'. p139.
[20] Bruce Grant, The Crisis of Loyalty: A Study Of Australian Foreign Policy, London, Angus & Robertson, 1972. p1.
[21] Norman Harper, 'Australian Foreign Policy' in Australia, New Zealand, and the Pacific Islands Since the First World War, William S. Livingston and Roger Louis (ed.), Austin, University of Texas Press, 1979. p101.

better than no *pax* at all."[22] The implied standpoint of the Conservative orientation is that only an international Leviathan, such as that represented by a friendly superpower, can ensure an international order amenable to Australia's interests.

Since the decline of the British Empire, advocates of the Conservative approach in Australian foreign policy have been particularly determined to secure the commitment of American military forces to Australia's region. To this end, Australian efforts included hosting US-Australian joint defence facilities at North West Cape, Pine Gap and Nurrungar in Australia, support for and participation in the Korean and Vietnam wars, and support for other American interests.[23] It also led Australia to lobby strongly and successfully for the ANZUS treaty, which it believed would guarantee the commitment of American military forces to the defence of Australia in the event of a military threat to the latter.[24]

The transfer of 'dependence' from Great Britain to the United States did signal a slight change in the foreign policy outlook in the Conservative tradition. While previous adherents to the Conservative approach in foreign policy might have considered Australia an integral part of Great Britain, the same could not be said of Australia's relationship with the United States. Great Britain was 'the mother country' and Australia is a dominion of the British monarch. In contrast, the United States was a former British colony like Australia. And a great and power friend, no matter how great or powerful, could not claim the historic role of Great Britain as Australia's political progenitor. Thus, the perception of common interests formed the basis of the relationship between the Australia and the United States, in contrast to

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[22] Robert W. Cox & Timothy J. Sinclair, Approaches to World Order, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1996. p243.
[23] H.R. Cowrie, Asia and Australia in World Affairs, Melbourne, Nelson, 1987. pp 217-224.
[24] Coral Bell, Dependent Ally: A Study in Australian Foreign Policy.

the Menzies' belief in the special relationship that resulted in inextricable and synonymous interests between Australia and Great Britain. H.G. Gelber, a staunch advocate of the Conservative approach makes a similar point when he describes the relationship between Australia and the United States:

> "This is not, of course, to suggest that Australian and US concerns are, or even have been, identical. But it is to acknowledge that general political and strategic confidence and stability in the Pacific, East and Southeast Asia and the Indian Ocean would be unthinkable without active American participation in its maintenance. It is further to say that Australia's economic welfare, her trading patterns, her ambitions for national development as well as her security, depend critically upon this stability and confidence and, to this extent, upon established Australian ties with the United States."[25]

In essence, however, the overall strategy of the Conservative approach has remained unchanged. It remains based on the perception that Australia is best engaged in playing a supporting role as a 'loyal lieutenant' to a great power in international relations, as opposed to pursuing an independent and a leading role.

The focus of the Conservative approach has always been on key bilateral relationships with great powers. While a recent White Paper referred to a "selective approach to the multilateral agenda" and stressed the need for Australia to "concentrate its involvement in multilateral issues in areas where its national interests are closely engaged," the tone adopted suggested doubts about the general efficacy of multilateral instruments.[26] The Conservative approach clearly demonstrates a reluctance to regard diplomatic activism within multilateral forums as the appropriate and primary focus of Australian foreign policy. Instead, stronger faith is placed in the traditional Conservative strategy of engaging in strategic bilateral

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[25] H. G. Gelber, 'Australia and East Asia', in Australia's External Relations In The 1980s: The Interaction of Economic, Political and Strategic Factors, Paul Dibb (ed.), Canberra, Croom Helm, 1983. p110.

relationships. The Foreign and Trade Policy White Paper, *In The National Interest*, states:

> "A central feature of the Government's approach to foreign and trade policy is the importance it places on bilateral relationships as a means of advancing Australian interests. Bilateral relationships are not an alternative to regional and global efforts. All three approaches must be deployed in an integrated and mutually supportive way. *The greater part of Australia's international efforts is, however, bilateral, and bilateral relationships, carefully nurturing newer relationships which engage key Australian interests, and expanding others which offer opportunities for Australia will be the core part of the Government's diplomatic activity.*" [italics added][27]

Therefore, regional or global multilateral strategies, while deemed important, are considered secondary. Instead, the primary focus of the Conservative tradition is its emphasis on bilateral relations, and in particular, upon Australia's relationship with its traditional great power allies.

The Labor Tradition in Australian Foreign Policy

The Labor approach is characterised by its efforts to provide a viable alternative to the Conservative emphasis on Australia's relationship with great power allies in foreign affairs. It is based on adopting a role for Australia that is not primarily guided by what Australia thinks its great power allies would like it to do. The early examples of Australian foreign policy, which diverged from the traditional Conservative approach (and which might arguably be described as inchoate expressions of the Labor tradition), have been more closely associated with specific

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[26] In the National Interest: Australia's Foreign and Trade Policy White Paper. piii
[27] In the National Interest: Australia's Foreign and Trade Policy White Paper. piii

personalities, as opposed to being presented as a distinctive and consistent theme in Australian foreign policy.[28]

T.B. Miller, the Australian historian, argues that an unambiguously separate approach towards foreign policy really only began with the election of Gough Whitlam in 1972.[29] Miller contends that, prior to Whitlam, the only significant issue of dispute in foreign policy had been over the establishment of diplomatic relations with the People's Republic of China and that there was little difference in the strategy adopted in terms of diplomatic goals.[30] While Miller's arguments clearly understate the distinctive path blazed by Evatt in foreign policy and Curtin's stance in the Second World War and subjective with respect to what represented a significant issue of dispute in foreign policy, they do tend to reflect a popular view. Such a view was probably reinforced by Menzies' long and dominant reign as Prime Minister. Australia's long preoccupation with the Cold War (and the fear of being branded subversive) might also have subdued assertions of independence in foreign policy or any significant divergence of view from the United States.

A Labor tradition was never really acknowledged as a clearly defined and separate theme in Australian foreign policy by many observers until Whitlam. Regardless of whether Curtin or Evatt was the first to establish a separate and distinctive foreign policy orientation for Australia, Whitlam's imprint on the character of Australian foreign policy is undeniable. On the day that he was sworn in as Prime Minister and

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[28]For example, Evatt's accomplishment in foreign policy for Australia tends to be more closely identified with him as a person, rather than touted as an expression of a 'tradition' in foreign policy. Of course, Evatt has also been credited with establishing the principles upon which the Labor tradition in foreign policy are based. MacMahon Ball, 'Introduction', in H.V. Evatt, Foreign Policy of Australia: Speeches, Sydney, Angus & Robertson Ltd, 1945.

[29] T.B. Millar, Australia in Peace and War, External Relations Since 1788, second edition, Canberra, Australian National University Press, 1991. p330.

30 T.B. Millar, Australia in Peace and War, External Relations Since 1788. p330.

Foreign Minister, Whitlam established the tone of Labor's approach to foreign policy and unambiguously set it apart from the Conservative tradition. Whitlam states:

> "... the general direction of my thinking is towards a more independent Australian stance in international affairs and towards an Australia which will be less militarily oriented and not open to suggestions of racism; an Australia which will enjoy a growing standing as a distinctive, tolerant, co-operative and well-regarded nation not only in the Asian and Pacific region but in the world at large."[31]

Thus, with Whitlam, a Labor orientation in foreign policy that is clearly, consistently and deliberately differentiated from the Conservative tradition emerged.

In contrast to the Conservative orientation, the Labor approach to Australian foreign policy tends to be premised on less state-centric and more idealistic principles. David Lee states:

> "For Labor governments this meant first, laying the foundations for a lasting world peace through international economic cooperation to achieve full employment and rising living standards, and second, solving international problems through diplomacy and multilateral institutions rather than through 'power politics' and the use of force."[32]

This is not to say that Australia's national interests are deemed less important but that the Labor approach to foreign policy recognises the fact that international relations often involves 'universal' causes that go beyond the narrow interests of a nation state. Therefore, within the Labor tradition, the welfare of workers, human rights and other universal ideals are regarded as ideals that should be defended by

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31 CNIA, Vol. 43, no. 12, December 1972. p619, cited in T.B. Millar, Australia in Peace and War, External Relations Since 1788. pp229-330.

32 David Lee, 'The Curtin and Chifley Governments, Liberal Internationalism and World Organisation', in Evatt to Evans: The Labor Tradition in Australian Foreign Policy, David Lee & Christopher Waters (eds.), Canberra, Allen & Unwin, 1997. p48.

Australian foreign policy, even though the language employed in championing such causes might often be couched in terms of national interest.

The Labor orientation towards foreign policy is also characterised by its emphasis on a role that is more independent and less reliant on Australia's great power allies. As such, it has been traditionally inclined towards regionalist and multilateral institutions because these structures provide a middle power, such as one with Australia's capabilities, with greater opportunities for a more assertive role in international relations. In the Labor approach to foreign policy, the significance of multilateralism can be understood in terms of the fact that it represents both a value and a process. In part, the commitment to multilateralism represented a logical extension of a policy that is based on pursuing universalistic ideals which serve the common good, as opposed to narrow egotistical state interests.

Multilateral consultative processes in international relations are perceived as a form of democracy, and support for these processes is in keeping with the pursuit of democratic liberal ideals. In part, the commitment to multilateralism has been based on the acknowledgement of a middle power's limited ability to unilaterally influence developments in the state system. Thus, the commitment to multilateralism, and particularly multilateral institutional arrangements, demonstrated by the Labor tradition in foreign policy is not surprising, given its desire to assert a more independent role in international relations and Australia's limitations as a middle power. The former Labor Foreign Minister, Gareth Evans states:

> "I believe that the Hawke and Keating governments were governments in the great Labor tradition - intensely nationalist in our determination to find and articulate a distinctive Australian place in the world; intensely internationalist in our willingness to work through multilateral institutions and processes in finding

> solutions to problems; and intensely active in pursuing the objectives we defined for ourselves."[33]

Therefore, there appeared to be a natural and acknowledged affinity between the defence of Australian interests through multilateral institutional arrangements and the ideals and aspirations inherent in the Labor orientation towards foreign policy.

The commitment to multilateralism that has been demonstrated by the Labor approach to foreign policy is not merely the expression of an ideal but also a deliberate diplomatic strategy to maximise Australia's influence in international relations. Ironically, this reflects a 'Realist' appreciation of Australia's limitations as a middle power but adopts a different strategy to that taken by the Conservative approach in response to these limitations. Whereas the Conservative approach sought to defend Australian interests through a strategy of 'loyalty' to, and hopes of reciprocity from, great powers, the Labor approach sought active participation in, and initiation of, multilateral arrangements that would allow it to assume a more independent and influential role in international relations.

The limitations on what Australia can achieve through the Labor strategy in foreign policy are recognised by its adherents. In defending the Labor approach, Gareth Evans argues that:

> "Globally, as indeed at all levels, we have to recognise our limitations. As a middle power, not a great or a major power, we do not have the clout to rely on anything other than our capacity to persuade - a capacity often best applied by building coalitions of the like-minded."[34]

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[33] Gareth Evans, 'The Labor Tradition', in Evatt to Evans: The Labor Tradition in Australian Foreign Policy, David Lee & Christopher Waters (eds.), Canberra, Allen & Unwin, 1997. pp15-16.
[34] Gareth Evans, 'The Labor Tradition'. p18.

In the context of multilateral diplomacy in the state system, the question of resources is a significant issue and a factor in determining influence. Barston explains that:

> "The overall impact of a delegation will vary depending on factors such as negotiating past history, diplomatic skills, contribution to the intellectual process of negotiation and formal or informal committee roles. In some instances, limited resources may mean that a delegation's input is deliberately restricted, for example to the legal field, (e.g. Kenya, Singapore). Larger states such as the United States, United Kingdom and the Netherlands have acquired roles, in addition to their traditional technical input, as treaty-drafting specialists, invariably serving on drafting committees."[35]

However, as a technologically advanced middle power, Australia does not suffer from many of the limitations that restrict the participation or success of some small powers in multilateral forums. Indeed, Australia often trades upon its prestige and reputation for technical expertise in specific issue areas to establish a niche where it can play an active role (and often a leadership role) in setting the agenda for multilateral institutional arrangements.

The Labor orientation in foreign policy found its strongest and most sustained period of expression during the 1980s to the mid-1990s, when a Labor government enjoyed a long spell in office. In particular, during the years of Evan's tenure as Foreign Minister, multilateralism was vigorously advocated as an opportunity for Australia to seize the leadership on various issues on the international agenda. Leaver and Cox expresses the view that:

> "Especially during Gareth Evans' reign as foreign minister - a period that commenced just on the cusp of the evident collapse of the Cold War order - the brief for what quickly became known as 'middle power multilateralism' became a rallying call for the reform of 'the rules of the game' within regional and global contexts. In one field after another, Labor foreign policy under Evans took up postures that championed the cause of greater

[35] R.P. Barston, Modern Diplomacy. p173.

> equality through the means of a higher degree of interstate cooperation."[36]

Evans saw the end of the Cold War as an opportunity for middle powers such as Australia to play a more active role in shaping international affairs through multilateralism. According to Leaver and Cox, multilateral diplomacy, during Evan's stewardship, had been:

> "... conceived as an open-ended process whereby the formal but substantially limited sovereignty of individual states would be 'pooled' in order to enhance the collective capacity of 'the society of states' to deal with problems and issues whose effects were increasingly global in scope. The argument implicitly acknowledged the limitations of unilateralism: the policies of any single state, no matter how powerful, were increasingly insufficient for solving global tasks. Cooperation was in this sense, the logical successor to hegemony, a modern strategy for the provision of world order in the wake of declining leadership by the superpowers."[37]

The Labor tradition in Australian foreign policy is also notable for its ambitions in actively seeking a leadership role in international relations. It was not enough to simply participate in multilateral institutional arrangements. Instead, the advocates for the Labor approach believed that as a wealthy and resourceful middle power, Australia could and should seek to provide intellectual and diplomatic leadership on multilateral initiatives to establish, expand, and extend the number of multilateral institutional arrangements in the state system. Thus, adherents to the Labor approach have devoted much energy and resources towards establishing and maintaining multilateral forums and regulatory arrangements, particularly within Australia's region. Some of these multilateral initiatives include the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation, the Cairns Group, the ASEAN Regional Forum, the Madrid Protocol to

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[36] Richard Leaver and Dave Cox, 'Introduction: the world according to Gar', in Middling, Meddling, Muddling: Issues in Australian Foreign Policy, Richard Leaver and Dave Cox (eds.), Sydney, Allen & Unwin, 1997. p2

[37] Richard Leaver and Dave Cox, 'Introduction: the world according to Gar'. pp5-6.

the Antarctic Treaty, the Convention on the Southern Blue Fin Tuna and the Niue Treaty.

Indeed, so enthusiastic was Evan's about the role that Australia could play as a middle power and so widespread was Australia's involvement in multilateral initiatives that this led to some unkind cynicism. Nossal notes that in some quarters:

> "There is a suspicion that middle power Initiatives are little more than initiative-mongering - in other words, middle powers seek Initiatives in order to demonstrate to their domestic publics that they are engaged in 'International Good Works,' or even more cynically, in order to gain a Nobel Peace Prize for its promoter."[38]

Whatever the motives of the individuals involved, the fact remained that the Labor approach remains wedded to the belief that middle powers do have the capacity to play a leadership role in the state system. And that Australia, in particular, is well suited to the role of initiating or setting agendas for multilateral institutional arrangements within the state system.

Finally, the Labor approach is characterised by its emphasis on the development of regional structures. In contrast to the Conservative approach which regarded great power patronage as the key to regional security and the defence of Australian interests, the Labor approach (at least in recent years) has demonstrated strong enthusiasm for the development of regional structures to defend Australian interests. Leaver and Cox state:

> "Evans central theme of cooperation assumed particular pertinence in the Asia-Pacific region, where 'economic dynamism' had already delivered at least half of Fukuyama's pay-dirt during decades that were elsewhere associated with simultaneous inflation and stagnation. The lifting of Cold War structures therefore

[38] Kim Richard Nossal, 'Middle Power Diplomacy in the Changing Asia-Pacific Order: Australia and Canada Compared'. p214.

> appeared to allow for precisely the kinds of intellectual leadership that Evans was set upon. It precipitated proposals for the development of political mechanisms spanning both the economic and strategic domains that would bed down this already existing victory of the market, while simultaneously expressing an historically new sense of community in regional affairs."[39]

There was a very strong commitment towards multilateral solutions for regional issues during the period when the Labor approach guided Australian foreign policy. Indeed, so ardent was Australia's engagement with its region and in its pursuit of regional arrangements during the Labor Party's tenure in government (1983 to 1996) that there was some concern that Australia might have neglected its traditional allies.[40]

Although adherents to the Labor approach in foreign policy have enthusiastically called for the development of regional structures, this has often been accompanied by a preference for American involvement in such initiatives. In part, this is due to the fact that United States' involvement represented an additional expression of its commitment to Australia's region - a commitment that is seen by both the Conservative and Labor approaches as being crucial to Australia's interests. While adherents to the Labor approach in foreign policy clearly do not intend for Australia to forsake its traditional alliances, they obviously regard the development of regional multilateral security structures as crucial to Australia's interests and additional insurance. Thus, the Labor approach is characterised by a strong commitment to a role for Australia in multilateral and regional structures that can be differentiated from a role that is based on Australia's relationship with its great power allies.

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[39] Richard Leaver and Dave Cox, 'Introduction: the world according to Gar'. p5.
[40] In the National Interest: Australia's Foreign and Trade Policy White Paper. piv.

Common Themes In Australian Foreign Policy

Geopolitical changes have resulted in a growing commitment to regionalism, as well as prompting Australia to review its strategic interest in viable regional multilateral institutional arrangements. The Labor tradition in Australian foreign policy clearly typifies the strategy expected of a middle power in international relations from process oriented perspectives.[41] The Labor approach advocates a strong role for Australia in international multilateral processes and sees in multilateral institutional arrangements an opportunity for middle powers to exercise leadership and influence in international relations. In contrast, the Conservative tradition in Australian foreign policy exhibits some of the characteristics that correspond with structuralist expectations of middle powers. It is based largely upon Australia's capacity to defend its interests by securing the good auspices of a great power, in return for which Australia would throw its weight as a middle power in support of the causes of the former.

There are two assumptions made in the Conservative approach. First, as a middle power, Australia can make sufficient contribution to the cause of a great power so as to render itself a valuable ally. Second, Australia's capacity to defend its own interests is inadequate without the assistance of a great power. These assumptions conform to the belief that geographic circumstances permitting, middle powers may assume responsibility for regional security on behalf of great powers, as well as a significant role when a 'balance of power' is required.[42] Although the Conservative tradition appears to represent a stark alternative to the Labor approach, it is argued

[41] This could also be due to the fact that much of the recent literature on middle powers coincided with period in Australia when foreign policy was driven by Labor agendas, and thus there is a risk of tautology.
[42] See previous chapter.

that there might now be a growing consensus between the two on the issue of multilateralism and regionalism. The Conservative tradition in Australian foreign policy has been based largely on the geopolitical assumptions of an earlier era. While the language employed by adherents to the Conservative tradition remains largely unaltered and continues to stress a policy of 'loyalty to the protector', many of the original premises have changed. Geopolitical changes and years of strategic investment in regional institutions have rendered the differences between the Conservative and Labor approaches on the issue of multilateral institutional arrangements and regionalism to a question of emphasis, rather than diametrically opposed views.

The main issue confronting those who favour the Conservative approach in Australian foreign policy is the fact that American interests and presence within Australia's geographic region have declined significantly since the Cold War.[43] While the potential for regional conflict remains, in the absence of a great power threat to the United States, localised regional upheavals might not be regarded as a threat to American interests or as something that warrants American involvement. Thus, it is possible for Australia to find itself in a situation that was no different from that faced by its regional neighbours who do not have great power allies. This was a possibility pointed out by Soedjatmoko, who anticipated the issue[44] and warns that:

> "The other question to which Bruce Grant raises: whether a small or medium sized country is the same if it is non-aligned or allied to a major power, is most interesting. It could be a trap if some other factor did not come into play. This is that in the present world situation the possibilities for the application of external power to other countries, to situations in other countries, or to local international conflicts, has changed and has become quite limited.

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[43] Daljit Singh, 'ASEAN and the Security of Southeast Asia', in ASEAN in the New Asia: Issues & Trends, Chia Siow Yue, Singapore, Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 1997. p129.

[44] Soedjatmoko was probably referring to inaction resulting from a stalemate during the Cold War rather than lack of interest from a great power.

> It is not inconceivable that there will be quite a number of dangerous international situations where the fact that one has a major power as an ally will be totally irrelevant. In fact the last five years have shown very clearly how limited the possibilities for a major power are to apply its power directly, either in defence of its own interests or in defence of its ally's interests."[45]

Thus far, Australian interests have been served when its great power allies have reacted to perceptions of threat from rival great powers within Australia's geographic region.[46] However, the reliability of the strategy of dependence on great power allies has yet to be truly tested in circumstances where the interests of those allies are not directly threatened. The basis of the Conservative tradition in Australian foreign policy is that assistance from Australia's great power allies would be forthcoming, if required. The limitation of the Conservative tradition is that it has yet to address the possibility that Australia's great power allies might not respond as desired and the circumstances wherein this might occur.

An assessment of Australia's independent capacity to defend its interests in international relations is essential if its status as a middle power is to be accurately comprehended. However, the Conservative tradition in foreign policy offers limited insight on Australia's capacity to assert itself as a middle power. This is due to the fact that irrespective of whether the policy of "loyalty to the protector" would be reciprocated by a great power, the question of the extent to which Australia's is able to influence its region unilaterally would remain unanswered.

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[45] Soedjatmoko, 'The role of the Medium and Small Nations in the new Asia-Pacific Setting', in Foreign Policy for Australia: Choices for the Seventies, Proceedings of the 39th Summer School, Australian Institute of Political Science, held at Canberra, 27-29 January 1973, Canberra, Angus and Robertson, 1973. p62.

[46] This point is of course arguable, especially in the context of the Vietnam War. See Coral Bell, Dependent Ally: A Study in Australian Foreign Policy. pp69-86.

An analysis of the policy of "loyalty to the protector" would at best only reveal the extent to which Australia is able to lobby a great power like the United States to act on Australia's behalf. It would not offer any insight as to the extent to which Australia could play a significant role in the state system, especially within its own geographic region, in its own capacity as a middle power. The logic of a foreign policy based on strategic dependence would also infer that a "repentant" New Zealand that made similar expressions of "loyalty to the protector" could potentially wield the same power and influence as a middle power like Australia both within its region and the general state system.

> "To question the policy of loyalty to the protector, however, is not necessarily to question reliance on the United States. Loyalty to the protector was only a means to an end. It would be perfectly possible for us to conclude that we should now strike a more independent attitude, and be much readier to dissent from American policies, while at the same time holding that our ability to rely on the United States would not be jeopardized by this, and remained the basis of our policy."[47]

Notwithstanding the efficacy of a policy based on reliance, it is necessary to differentiate between Australia's ability to solicit the protection of an ally in defence of its interests and its innate capacity as a middle power to assume an effective independent role in international relations. It is the ability of a state to defend general interests within its own region that is the measure of a middle power, and not simply its ability to secure the protection of a great power, even though a middle power might find the latter easier to accomplish.[48]

In spite of the differences between the two traditions in Australian foreign policy, they both share a common understanding of some of the limitations that Australia must face as a middle power and the significance of the changing geo-political

realities in Australia's region. The end of the Cold War and other geopolitical changes has resulted in a multipolar international environment that necessitates a reappraisal of many strategic interests. The challenge to adherents of both foreign policy orientations is to translate Australia's status as a middle power into significant influence within its region. This has seem a convergence in policy orientation towards a stronger focus on regionalism and multilateral institutional arrangements.

Historically, Australia has been one of the most powerful and wealthy states in a region characterised by developing nations that are poor and relatively weak. Thus, its role has been that of a regional great power, and to a significant degree, Australia has been able to unilaterally cultivate a regional political environment that serves its interests. Ross Babbage points out that:

> "[An] important theme in Australia's security policy is the enduring national interest in encouraging the maintenance of a favourable strategic environment in the surrounding regions. Australian foreign and economic policies contribute significantly to ensuring that PNG, the Southwest Pacific and the ASEAN countries remain relatively free from major instability and external interference."[49]

Acting in the capacity of a regional great power, Australia has served as a power that is regarded both as an unofficial spokesman for its region (at least in Western councils), as well as the regional champion of Western hegemonic interests. Australia has also been able to offer considerable support to regional economies and play a significant role in defending security interests within its region either through direct economic assistance or such programmes as the Colombo Plan. Indeed, Australia's regional hegemonic status is reflected in the fact that the greater part of

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[47] Hedly Bull, 'Options for Australia'. p139.
[48] See previous chapter.

its foreign policy has traditionally been directed at extra-regional great powers, such as Germany, Japan, China or the Soviet Union. And addressing the extent to which these extra-regional powers have been able to manifest a presence or pose a threat to Australian interests, in the vicinity of Australia's region. However, while extra-regional threats still occupied the minds of Australian strategic planners, geo-political changes have resulted in a reorientation of mindset and greater attention towards regional actors.

The end of the overriding ideological divide that dominated the international political discourse during the Cold War has also meant that underlying differences between Australia and the United States have acquired greater prominence then they might otherwise have had. Australian interests with respect to agricultural subsidies and its differences with the United States and Europe on that issue are unlikely to be served by "loyalty to the protector". Nor is Australia's current stance on setting targets for the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions compatible with that of the United States or Europe. Thus, the practice of "building coalitions of the like-minded" has become an important alternative strategy through which Australian interests might be defended and secured through multilateral institutional arrangements. However, Australia can no longer automatically assume its traditional allies will be 'like-minded'.

The end of the Cold War and other geopolitical changes has also provided opportunities, as well as incentives for more regional multilateral arrangements,

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[49] Ross Baggage, 'Australian Foreign Policy: The Security Objectives', in In Pursuit of National Interests: Australian Foreign Policy in the 1990s, Mediansky, F.A. & Palfreeman (eds.), Sydney, Pergamon Press, 1988. p116.

which were previously absent.[50] The significance of the recent geo-political changes for Australia is stressed by former Prime Minister, Paul Keating who declares that:

> "For the time being, at least, the role of the great powers in shaping the development of the international system is less dominant than it otherwise might be. And this, as I said earlier, is happening at the very time when we are moulding the institutions and processes and ways of resolving problems which will form the pattern of the next period in international relations. I think one outcome of this situation is that regionalism and regional approaches will come into their own as never before."[51]

Australia's consciousness of its geography has been reinforced by the United States' departure from the Subic Bay naval facility in the Philippines and by the reduction of the American military presence in Australia's geographic region with the end of the Cold War. In the strategic reassessments that ensued, defence self-reliance has become a theme that is stressed and repeated. The Defence White Paper 1994 reiterates the theme of greater self-reliance and recognises the fact that with the end of the Cold War, the United States:

> "will neither seek nor accept primary responsibility for maintaining peace and stability in the region, ... [and that] Australia's security is not so vital to other nations that we can assume others would commit substantial forces to our defence."[52]

Thus, there is a sense that regional solutions to regional issues are now required.

The rapid economic growth in East Asia has also played a part in reinforcing Australia's sense of regionalism and has brought the fact that many of the states in Australia's region have developed significant new capabilities sharply into focus.

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[50] Barrie Axford, The Global System: Economics,Politics and Culture, Cambridge, Polity Press, 1996. pp186-190. Charles W. Kegley, Jr. & Gregory A. Raymond, A Multipolar Peace? Great Power Politics in the Twenty-First Century.

[51] Paul Keating, Australia, Asia and the New Regionalism, Singapore, Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 1996. pp15-16.

[52] Defending Australia: Defence White Paper 1994. p8 & p13.

Economic development has reduced the level of dependency of many East Asian states on foreign aid, and their stronger economies have also led to the modernisation of their armed forces and the acquisition of modern weaponry. Thus, while Australia currently retains superiority in economic and military capability, it can no longer claim the predominance it once possessed. The previously wide disparity in terms of power and influence between Australia and its East Asian neighbours has diminished considerably.

There appears to be much greater self-confidence among many of the states in Australia's geographic region, with many states assuming a stronger presence in international relations. In particular, Indonesia and Malaysia have been outspoken on the international stage and they have made a bid for leadership on various international causes, especially with respect to the interests of non-aligned states and East Asian states. Developments in the South Pacific have also resulted in a stronger sense of regionalism from Australia. While the asymmetries between Australia and the South Pacific island states remain obvious, the independence of the latter and consequently, the possibility that they might ally themselves to powers in relationships inimical to Australian interests has been an issue that has prompted stronger efforts from Australia to engage the region. These and other issues have meant that Australia's region has become significant in and of itself, both in terms of what it can contribute to Australian interests, as well as the potential threat that it might pose.

Australia can no longer take its role as a regional great power for granted because the countries in its region have become significant factors in and of themselves. In the past, most were not regarded as anything more than props in a contest between great

powers and certainly incapable of posing a threat or contributing anything significant to Australia's security.[53] The relatively low level of development in the countries neighbouring Australia during the Cold War, as well as the fact that some mainland markets in East Asia were 'closed' to Australian exports, have also meant that strategic bilateral relationships made more sense than regional economic cooperation at the time.[54] However, rapid economic growth in East Asia, fear of economic protectionism organised along regional lines, the end of the Cold War and the changing patterns of Australia's overseas trade have overhauled Australia's economic relationships with its region.[55]

While region-wide economic institutional arrangements remain embryonic, the end of the Cold War and the growing level of development in the region have meant greater gains from regional cooperation, including potential rewards from intra-regional markets and investment opportunities. Sub-regional arrangements, such as the economic growth triangle comprising Singapore, Johor and Batam, to exploit institutional linkages have become more common.[56] In non-economic areas, the ability to defend common political interests in global forums has also been an incentive for regional institutions.[57] Thus, there are compelling reasons for Australia to position itself strategically and advantageously within regional institutions and to play a significant role in setting the agenda for regional multilateral institutional

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[53] Joint Intelligence Committee Appreciation 1/47, Melbourne 27 March 1947, Appreciation of Certain Aspects of the Strategic Position of Australia, cited in Documents on Australian Foreign Policy 1937-49, Volume XII: 1947, W.J. Hudson & Wendy Way (eds.), Canberra, Australian Government Publishing Service, 1995.

[54] Miles Kahler, 'Institutional-Building In the Pacific', in Pacific Cooperation: Building Economic and Security Regimes in the Asia-Pacific Region, Andrew Mack & John Ravenhill (eds.), St Leonard's, Allen & Unwin, 1994.

[55] East Asian Analytical Unit, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Australia's Business Challenge: South-East Asia In The 1990s, Canberra, Commonwealth of Australia government, 1992.

[56] It should be noted that the issue of relative gains is also inherent in such arrangements. See Micheal Vatikiotis, 'Chip off the block", Far East Economic Review, 7 January 1993, p54.

[57] Joseph A. Camilleri, 'The Asia-Pacific in the Post-Hegemonic World', in Pacific Cooperation: Building Economic and Security Regimes in the Asia-Pacific Region, Andrew Mack & John Ravenhill (eds.), St Leonard's, Allen & Unwin, 1994. p197.

arrangements. It is, in part, in recognition of these new geopolitical realities that the Labor tradition has moderated its Idealist approach towards international relations.[58] In principle, universal ideals are still being championed, however, in practice, the energy in foreign policy, especially during Evan's tenure, has been focused strongly on pragmatic regional initiatives for the development of multilateral institutions. Such regional institutional arrangements are seen as the key towards regional security and stability.

A 'flexible' attitude towards such universal causes as human rights has been adopted in foreign policy when necessary in order to secure desired outcomes. Australia's leadership role in rejecting the Convention Regulating Antarctic Minerals Activity and promoting the Madrid Protocol to the Antarctic Treaty might be cited as examples of its international leadership in championing environmental ideals. However, Australia's more subtle efforts to establish and reinforce regional multilateral initiatives like the Kuala Lumpur Roundtable Conferences and its subdued rhetoric with respect to human rights in South East Asia have demonstrated a more pragmatic approach to diplomacy.

Australia's efforts to engage its region were particularly pronounced during Evan's tenure as Australia's foreign minister. Evan's regional priorities are clearly stated.

> "The most active, and probably the most distinctive, dimension of Australia's diplomacy in recent years has been regional - as we set about trying to give systematic content to the idea of an Asia Pacific community ... a community, moreover, in which Australia is unequivocally seen not as an outsider or bit player, but as an accepted, involved, participating partner."[59]

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[58] Mihaly Simai, 'Systemic Changes: Breakup of the Soviet Bloc', in The New Realism: Perspectives on Multilateralism and the World Order, Robert W. Cox (ed.), Tokyo, United Nations University Press, 1997.

Paul Keating reiterates this sentiment, when as Prime Minister, he states:

> "Our somewhat unlikely history and geography should not change this fundamental conviction and this irrevocable commitment - that Australia is and must always be an integral part of the region around us."[60]

During the past decade, Australia has initiated or committed itself to a number of regional multilateral institutional arrangements. This represents a strategic investment in terms of resources and highlights Australia's determined effort to establish a comprehensive institutional and multilateral framework through which it can effectively engage its region. In view of the energy and resources committed to many of these initiatives, they can not be easily abandoned, not even by advocates of a more Conservative approach in foreign policy, especially in light of recent geopolitical changes. Instead, many of the established regional multilateral institutional arrangements are now generally acknowledged as crucial confidence building measures and the building blocks for a more secure regional environment.

The role that Australia has played in multilateral institutional arrangements within its geographic region provides a strong indication of Australia's capacity for influence as a middle power. Whereas the Conservative tradition might have had differences with the Labor tradition as to the extent to which multilateralism is a useful device for maximising Australia's capacity for influence,[61] the relevance of multilateral arrangements on issues where Australia's "national interests [were] closely engaged" has not been denied.[62] Thus, even if it is only a resigned acceptance of the fact, the

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[59] Gareth Evans, 'The Labor Tradition'. p19.
[60] Paul Keating, Australia, Asia and the New Regionalism. pp11-12.
[61] It should be noted that these are differences in 'orientation' and reflect a shift in emphasis, as opposed to radical differences in policy and/or the perceptions of national interests. For studies of radical shifts and restructuring in foreign policy, see K.J. Holsti, Why Nations Realign: Foreign Policy Restructuring in the Postwar Era, London, Allen & Unwin, 1982.
[62] In the National Interest: Australia's Foreign and Trade Policy White Paper. p47.

Conservative orientation in foreign policy has come to acknowledge the stake that Australia has in regional multilateral institutional arrangements.[63] However, it has been the Labor approach that has been more aggressive in pursuing Australia's regional interests through multilateral institutional arrangements.

> "Unlike small powers, which in all circumstances found it advantageous to shackle themselves to the foreign policy of a great protector, middle powers were said to have most to gain by promoting cooperation based around neutral 'rules of the game' - and, conversely, most to lose when such principles failed to materialize."[64]

For the Labor approach, it is in providing intellectual leadership for the "rules of the game" and thereby defining the terms under which Australian interests can be best served by regional arrangements that Australia's role as a middle power is most clearly articulated. Indeed, it is generally acknowledged that there are some Australian interests that can only be satisfactorily addressed by multilateral institutions. An obvious example would be the challenge of regulating activity in and around Antarctica.

In short, notwithstanding the traditional differences between the Conservative and the Labor orientations in foreign policy, contemporary Australian diplomacy has been characterised by an increasing commitment to regionalism and to regional multilateral institutional arrangements. Geopolitical changes resulting in the diminution of great power interests in Australia's region, as well as the development of regional polities into more significant actors, have forced the reassessment of many Conservative premises about Australia's role as a middle power. This has resulted in greater convergence between the two foreign policy traditions in Australia.

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[63] In the National Interest: Australia's Foreign and Trade Policy White Paper. p47.

Conclusion

This chapter has demonstrated that Australian foreign policy has traditionally been guided by two distinct orientations to foreign policy, the Conservative orientation and the Labor orientation. The Conservative tradition tends to be premised on structuralist perspectives on what a middle power can achieve in international relations. As the above discussion has shown, the Conservative approach has reservations about what a middle power can achieve unilaterally in international relations. Instead, it has emphasised efforts to secure the patronage of a great power in order to assuage fears about the vulnerability of Australia's geographic situation. Security, which is regarded as the primary interest of a state, is sought through strategic alliances with great powers and influence over developments in international relations is derived through the same means. In contrast, the Labor approach to foreign affairs tends to be premised on process oriented perspectives, which suggest that states can defend a variety of interests through multilateral institutional arrangements. The Labor approach recognises the importance of the bilateral relationships between Australia and its great power allies but emphasise a different strategy to achieve influence and to defend regional interests. Thus, while the Labor approach has maintained and promoted the strength of Australia's relationship with its traditional allies, it has also strongly advocated a leadership role for Australia in regional multilateral initiatives.

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[64] Richard Leaver and Dave Cox, 'Introduction: the world according to Gar'. p5.

There are differing domestic interpretations about the appropriate role for a middle power in Australia and how it can best realise its objectives in foreign policy. The initiatives adopted by the Conservative and the Labor approaches to foreign policy represent different views about the appropriate mechanisms required to defend Australia's interests. However, it is argued that the Conservative and the Labor orientations on Australian foreign policy have both demonstrated, within their policies, an ambition to gain influence in international affairs, Australia's capacity as a middle power to achieve such influence successfully and a preoccupation with geography. Therefore, in terms of the working definition developed in the previous chapter, Australia clearly perceived itself as a middle power with both the ambition and the capacity to exercise significant influence in its regional environment.

This chapter also proposes that Australia has increasingly resorted to the use of multilateral institutional arrangements as a means of assuming a role of leadership and influence within its geographic region. It argues that over many years the Labor tradition in foreign policy has consistently favoured multilateral institutional arrangements. It demonstrates that strategic investments in such arrangements, as well as recent geo-political changes, have put pressure on adherents to the Conservative tradition to reassess their outlook on foreign policy and the importance of multilateral institutional arrangements in securing Australian influence within its regional environment. Therefore, notwithstanding the differences in domestic interpretations of Australia's role as a middle power, there has been some convergence in contemporary Australian foreign policy and this is characterised by the growing recognition of shared priorities of regionalism and multilateral institutional arrangements.

The arguments in this and preceding chapters suggest that the physical attributes of a state represent a necessary but not a sufficient condition for middle power status. Situational factors, including geography, also define the role that a middle power can play in international relations. As a middle power, Australia is expected to be able to defend general interests within its geographic region. However, Australia finds itself in the unique position of being guided by two distinctive foreign policy orientations and being situated in a geographic location where it can claim to be a part of four distinct geographic locations. Thus, Australia's role as a middle power is complicated by the fact that the defence of its regional interests and the consistency of its foreign policy are challenged by a variety of situational factors in four distinct geographic regions.

The discussion in this chapter has highlighted Australia's sense of insecurity over its own limitations as a middle power, the perception of greater opportunities for influence within regional multilateral institutional arrangements, the strategic investments made in such arrangements and the geopolitical changes that have reduced the efficacy of other options. These factors support the argument that there has been a convergence between Australia's two foreign policy orientations and that, as a middle power, Australia has been inclined to assume a leadership role and influence within its geographic regions and the contemporary state system. Thus, it is proposed that an examination of the empirical evidence of Australia's role as a middle power in its four regions would reflect its tendency to assume influence through regional multilateral institutional arrangements.

CHAPTER 4

> "The point of greatest relevance to the present inquiry is that relationships between ourselves and the Pacific Island states are invariably relationships of inequality. The economic gap between ... Australia ... on the one hand and the economies of the islands on the other is the central fact of our mutual relations. ... In neither case can the richer power, as an ex-colony itself, comfortably accept an imperial role towards its poorer neighbours. In neither case can the mutual rights and obligations of the respective peoples be satisfactorily understood without recognising the economic inequality between them." - Richard Mulgan[1]

Introduction

In the examination of Australia's ambition to exercise significant influence within the South Pacific region, Australia's interests within that region are investigated. It is revealed that Australia's sense of vulnerability, emanating from the fear that a hostile great power may threaten its security through the possession or control of the Pacific Islands, has been arguably the most significant factor governing its interests in the South Pacific region. The perceived threats to Australian security have ranged from past enemies of the British Empire, such as France and Germany, to more recent figures of fear in Japan and the Soviet Union. These perceptions of threat have underpinned Australia's ambition for a sphere of influence in the South Pacific region. In addition to the primary interests that these security issues represent, it is argued that Australia is also motivated by other reasons in seeking a role of

significant influence within the South Pacific region. This included a sense of altruism that began with the interest of a liberal colonial power in the welfare of the native peoples of the South Pacific. And which evolved to the sense of responsibility or obligation to developing nations that is prerequisite of the 'good international citizen' and developed state that Australia has laid claim to being. Therefore, Australia's role in the South Pacific region is consistent with that of a middle power in that it clearly exhibits both the ambition and the capacity to influence regional developments.

This chapter begins with a discussion of the factors affecting Australia's ambition to assume a role of significant influence in the South Pacific region. This is followed by an analysis of Australia's capacity to achieve its ambition. It is argued that Australia is capable of assuming a hegemonic role within the South Pacific region in various fashions compatible with the nominal definitions of middle powers described in Chapter Two. A review of the South Pacific suggests that Australia's relationship with the other states within the region is characterised by a high degree of asymmetry, where Australia enjoys an overwhelming superiority in such attributes, often cited as indicators of power, as population, economic resources, military strength and diplomatic influence. The asymmetric relationship between Australia and the Pacific Island states is aggravated by the fact that the latter have difficulty in unilaterally meeting all the obligations that are expected of sovereign states and are strongly reliant upon foreign aid. It is also proposed that Australia's capacity to maintain, through logistical and other support, regional multilateral institutions in the South Pacific and its participation in these institutions represents some of the other means by which it is able to assume significant influence within the region.

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[1] Richard G. Mulgan, 'South Pacific People's Rights', in The South Pacific: Problems, Issue and Prospects, Ramesh Thakur (ed.), London, Macmillan, 1991. p121.

A closer scrutiny of Australia's capacity to realise its ambitions for influence, including the empirical examples of its efforts to defend its interests, in the South Pacific region reveals that the means by which Australia has manifested its influence within the region have changed. It is argued that there are three facets, reflecting three periods of Australian history and foreign policy, to the primary security issues that prompted much of Australia's active involvement in South Pacific affairs.

The first period that informs the discussion on Australia's ambitions for an influential role over developments in the South Pacific and the means that it adopted to accomplish this end stretched from the early years following the establishment of the Australian Commonwealth to the end of the Second World War. During this period, Australia regarded itself as an integral part of the British Empire and sought to influence developments though the application of British Imperial power.

The second period began with the end of the Second World War when growing doubts about Great Britain's ability to project itself effectively as a world power saw Australia search for other arrangements that would help to defend its strategic interests. This is manifested in the ANZAC arrangements wherein Australia, together with New Zealand, carved out a regional niche for itself within the context of (what was to become) the Western Alliance, where their primacy, in terms of interests and influence could be acknowledged.[2] This quest for institutional guarantees within the framework of the Western Alliance is also evinced by the strong Australian lobby for

[2] The 'Western Alliance' is a rather vague concept whose membership varies from time to time. In the context of Australia's strategic outlook, it may be taken in this thesis to refer to the network of security arrangements centred around the United States and the United Kingdom, based on ethnic ties and perceptions of common interests. See discussion on 'the Conservative tradition in Australian foreign policy' in the previous chapter.

a security arrangement with the United States and the eventual agreement they reached on the ANZUS treaty, which committed the latter to Australia's region.

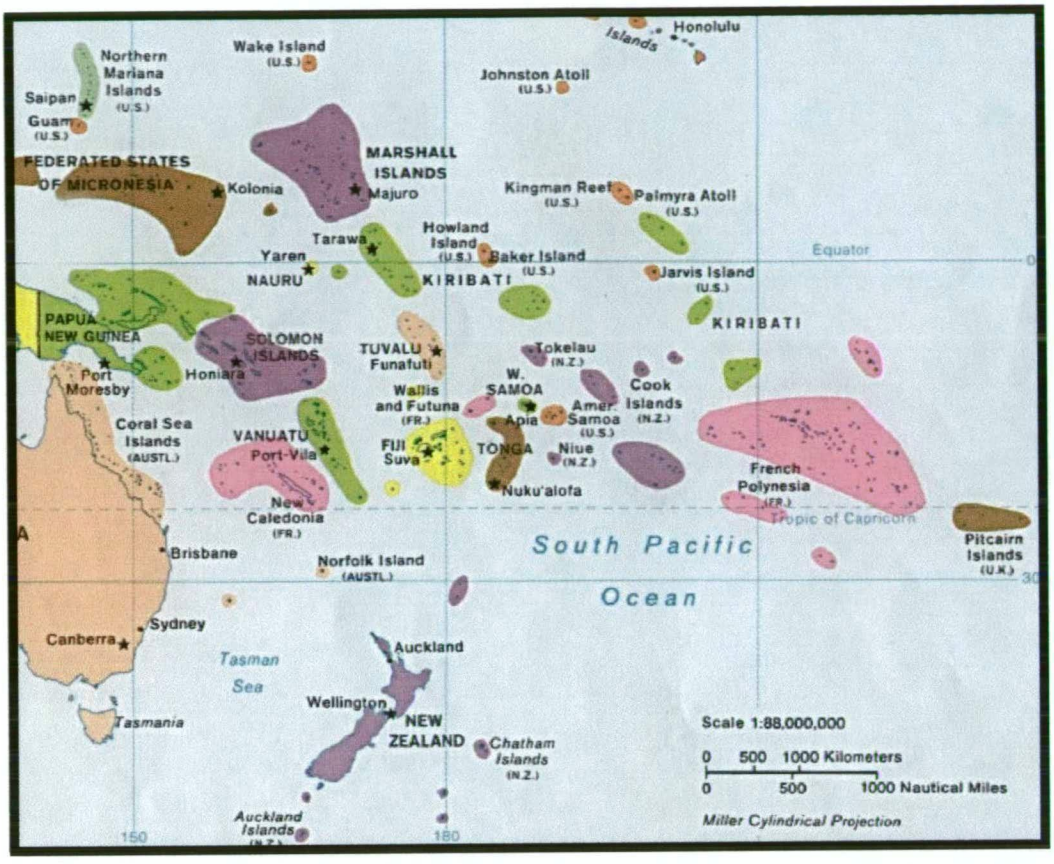
The third period runs concurrently with the second and is the result of decolonisation in the South Pacific region. With decolonisation, Australia quickly establish bilateral and multilateral ties with the independent Pacific Island states in order to forestall the rival influence of other metropolitan states over the former because it was feared that this might prove inimical to Australian interests. In particular, concerns about the possibility that the Soviet Union might establish a strategic presence in the South Pacific during the Cold War prompted Australia to support the creation of regional institutions, as well as to defend Australian interests through such regional forums. Especially as the appearance of consensus and institutional authority within such multilateral regional forums argue against the charge that Australia has treated the smaller Pacific Island states in a peremptory fashion.

The primary impetus driving Australia's ambition to influence developments within the South Pacific region demonstrated by these three facets of Australian foreign policy have remained consistent. And stems from Australia's desire to defend itself and to pre-empt the possibility of any security threat from the region. However, the responses to the perception of threat and desire for security have been varied and these different approaches shed light on the methods that Australia has deemed most effective or desirable in different circumstances. In the South Pacific region, Australia has adopted a role that may be described as hegemonic and which is consistent with the many of the archetypal expectations (described in the literature discussed in previous chapters) of a middle power. Regardless of whether one takes a structuralist or process oriented perspective, it is clear that Australia has staked a

claim for a leadership role within the South Pacific region. Australia's ability to direct regional policies on key issues is demonstrated in the idiosyncratic line pursued by Australia on the region's response to nuclear-related issues. Australia was able to resist the widespread regional clamour for a ban on all nuclear related products or activity in the South Pacific and to redirect those sentiments in order to construct a regional treaty that was more in accordance with its own interests. Australia's ability to influence developments in the South Pacific region is also again revealed in the pivotal role that it played in the regional arrangements on fisheries. In this instance, Australia was able to defend its own interests successfully, while balancing the needs of the independent Pacific island states against those of its ally, the United States.

Finally, this chapter argues that where structuralist perspectives provided a cogent explanation of Australia's earlier influence in the South Pacific region, process oriented perspectives have been more useful towards understanding Australia's role in the region following the decolonisation of the Pacific Island states. Thus, it is proposed that regional multilateral institutional arrangements have been an attractive medium of influence for a middle power like Australia, which is reluctant to be seen as a bully whose relationship with smaller states is explicitly based on coercion. Such arrangements also serve as effective vehicles of influence which enable Australia to successfully defend its interests within the South Pacific region and play a role akin to that of a regional hegemon.

The South Pacific Region



Source: Perry-Castañeda Library Map Collection, University of Texas at Austin, http://www.lib.utexas.edu/Libs/PCL/Map_collection/Map_collection.html

The Pacific Ocean is the world's largest ocean and occupies one-third of the world's surface. Geographically, the designation of a South Pacific region is conventionally used in reference to a scattering of small islands states over a broad expense of water in the south west corner of the Pacific Ocean and which is populated by Melanesians, Polynesians and Micronesians.[3]

The polities within this region can be differentiated into three groups. The group comprising the largest number of these polities is represented by the independent island states within the region. These polities are usually characterised by their small

[3] Richard G. Mulgan, 'South Pacific People's Rights'. p119.

populations and limited resource base, and are generally described as 'micro-states' or 'mini-states'. Australia and New Zealand fall within the second group. They are distinguished by the fact that they are metropolitan powers situated within the region, as well as the fact that the majority of their population is not deemed to be indigenous to the region. The third group is represented by the extra-regional powers, which maintain a presence within the South Pacific region through their colonies, political stewardship of Pacific Island territories or dependencies. These metropolitan powers include France, the United Kingdom and the United States. These three groups possess different levels of power and interests, and the dynamics of the relationship between them has been the dominant theme driving regional developments in the South Pacific.

The islands within the South Pacific region has been the subject of much romantic literature, musicals and films, and as such, an impression of the region as a remote paradise and sanctuary might have been conveyed to many. History provides a more balanced account of colonialism, 'blackbirding', disease and the struggles for independence. However, in comparison with other regions and other polities, violence and power politics have been an infrequent feature of international relations in the South Pacific. Certainly, the potential for violent conflict was demonstrated during the Second World War when Japan engaged the allied forces in great naval and aerial battles over the Pacific. Nevertheless, excepting occasional clashes between metropolitan powers within the region, the potential for violent conflict among the polities of the South Pacific region has been relatively low.

Since gaining independence, many of the Pacific Island states have made a determined effort to keep the region free from great power conflict. One factor that

might have contributed to the relatively low potential for conflict among the polities of the South Pacific is the limited resources and military capability of the small Pacific Island states. The fact that all the metropolitan powers with a territorial stake within the region (since World War Two) have been allied to one another is another significant factor. Consequently, other themes have dominated inter-state relations in the South Pacific.

In particular, two themes appeared to have had a strong influence on the discourse of politics in the South Pacific region. The first is the desire to exclude any potential extra-regional threat to peace and security from the region. The second is the need of the independent Pacific Island states to balance their dependence on economic and other assistance from metropolitan powers, with the desire to preserve their independence in foreign and domestic affairs. It is in the context of this brief review of the South Pacific region that Australia's role as a middle power is explored.

A Middle Power In The South Pacific Region

Australia's aspirations for a leadership role within the South Pacific region have always been open.[4] Australia's efforts to establish itself as a regional hegemon may be demonstrated by the history of its efforts to play a decisive role in the South Pacific, initially as a colonial power within the region, and subsequently through regional multilateral institutional arrangements.

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[4]Joint Committee On Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade, Australia's Relations With The South Pacific, Canberra, Australian Government Publishing Service, 1989.

As a colonial power, Australia signaled its ambitions by seeking to establish and extend a British sphere of influence within the South Pacific region (over which Australia would presumably have sway). Such regional influence would allow Britain, and consequently Australia, to pre-empt the possibility of a threat from hostile European powers to a remote dominion like Australia. The notion of a sphere of influence was revisited when a combination of British indifference and Australian assertiveness saw Australia give voice to its ambitions in post war councils following the First World War to demand acknowledgement of the primacy of Australian interests in the South Pacific region. In this regard, it is argued that the subsequent signing of the ANZAC Agreement and the ANZUS Treaty might be viewed as an effort to institutionalise a leading role for Australia in the South Pacific region, as the custodian of Western interests.

The passing of the colonial era saw a change in attitudes towards the region. The decolonisation of the Pacific Island states and the advent of the Cold War resulted in the perception of a potential threat to Australian and Western interests from a Soviet presence in the South Pacific region. There was a fear that the small but independent Pacific Island states might succumb to the influence of the Soviet Union. This prompted Australia to reinforce its bilateral and multilateral relationships with the Pacific Island states. Thus, it is proposed that while Australia has expressed its ambitions for a role of significant influence in the South Pacific in various fashions, the primary reasons behind these ambitions have been the desire to preserve Australia's sovereignty and security, as well as to defend its strategic interests.

It is also argued that Australia's ambition to assume a role of significant influence in the South Pacific region has been motivated by considerations apart from its strategic

interests. These include altruism and the determination to be a good international citizen by lending the resources and support of a wealthy middle power to small developing nations. To some extent, the two underlying motives driving the desire for influence, characterised by Idealism in one and Realism in the other, do overlap and are complementary. For example, the expression of Australia's interest in being a custodian of Western interests in the South Pacific region is compatible with its desire to protect the welfare of the native peoples in that region. Similarly, it may be said that Australia's efforts to play a leading role in establishing multilateral institutional arrangements for the South Pacific region is prompted both by Realist desires and Idealistic values. The former to buttress the capacity of the Pacific Island states to resist the real or imagined blandishments of rival powers (that might be deemed a threat to Australian interests). And the latter from a genuine desire to assist the small island states in overcome the limits of their size and limited resources.

The nature of Australia's ambitions and its endeavour to exercise influence over developments in the South Pacific region are reviewed in the next section of the chapter. It begins by discussing Australia's sense of vulnerability as a remote British dominion and how it has responded to its anxiety by seeking to establish influence over the South Pacific region. The initiatives by Australia to exercise decisive influence over the South Pacific region are divided into three phases and discussed in terms of the different approaches adopted in each. Australia's other interests, not related to security, in the South Pacific region are also examined and it is suggested that the sincerity of Australia's altruistic declarations or actions can be difficult to determine. Nevertheless, these may represent additional reasons for Australia's active role in the region. Therefore, it is concluded that for the reasons briefly cited

above, Australia has demonstrated the ambition to assume a role of significant influence over developments in the South Pacific region.

'Hands Off' - The Imperial Mindset

As a British dominion in the antipodes, Australia has always felt a sense of vulnerability because of its geography. In particular, this sense of insecurity has manifested itself in periodic outbursts of xenophobia and fear, especially when traditional foes of the British Empire (Dutch, German or French) are espied anywhere in the region around the vicinity of the Australian subcontinent. Indeed, it could be argued that the nascent advocacy of 'strategic denial' - a concept that was to have great significance in later years - dated back to the beginning of the Australian Federation. In a speech to the House of Representatives in 1901, Mr R.A. Crouch of the Protectionist Party proclaimed:

> "But I think we might even now establish a Monroe doctrine for the Pacific. ... We are for the first time rising to the heights of nationhood. We meet here as the representative House of the Australian nation. I should like the Ministry to at once establish the principle of 'hands off' in regard to all islands of the Pacific within a thousand miles of the Australian coast; that is they should be declared to be Australian territory within the jurisdiction of the Commonwealth; that is having due regard, of course, to present rights. We should lay it down that we will allow no other entrenchments upon those islands of the Pacific, which are, I think, proper appendages to this Commonwealth."[5]

Similar sentiments were echoed by the *Bulletin* (Sydney) in 1904:

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[5] Extract from a speech by Mr. R. A. Crouch (Protectionist) in the House of Representatives, 21 May 1901, C.P.D., Vol. I, 1901-2, pp87-88, reproduced in Gordon Greenwood & Charles Grimshaw, Documents on Australian International Affairs 1901-1918, London, Nelson, 1977. p455.

> "There is a certain natural and pardonable pride evoked by the idea, now current, of a 'Monroe doctrine' for Australia. That Australians should claim as their dominion, not only the continent, but all the islands of Oceania, is a large and magnificent notion which irresistibly appeals to the imagination. There is something fascinating about the prospect of crying 'hands off' to the rest of the world, and flaunting our flag from the west of South America to the east of Australia. ... The Australian Government is being strongly urged to shudder at the prospect of the New Hebrides becoming a French possession, and to take steps to prevent so woeful an event."[6]

Thus, Australia had declared a proprietary interest in the South Pacific region, with the primary intention of forestalling the presence of any potentially hostile powers in that region, since the earliest days of Federation.[7] While Australia clearly regarded itself as an integral part of the British Empire at that time, its self-identity as a distinct polity was equally obvious. As a well-defined polity, Australia's efforts to establish a sphere of influence in the Pacific were largely oriented towards putting pressure on the British government, especially its Foreign Office and its Admiralty and War Office, to establish and extend British Imperial influence over the South Pacific region. The extension of British influence within the South Pacific was regarded as the enlargement of Australia's own influence because Australia is a British dominion and was the overseer of Imperial interests in its region.

It was clear that Australia had different ideas from the 'Mother Country' about the stewardship of the South Pacific region. There were occasions when a combination of fear and frustration led Australia to take defence and diplomatic initiatives on its

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[6] It should be noted that the author of the article did interject with the opinion that "If in the meanwhile European powers establish themselves in Oceania there is no ground for protest, no need for alarm. We can not take up a dog-in-the-manger attitude of keeping others off what we cannot use ourselves [but] The establishment of an Asiatic power in Oceania would be a different matter. Against that, if it were proposed, the Commonwealth might with sense and reason direct its energies." In other words, a 'hands-off' policy is still advocated, albeit with a racial focus. 'An Australian Monroe Doctrine' in Bulletin (Sydney), 1 September 1904, reproduced in Gordon Greenwood & Charles Grimshaw, Documents on Australian International Affairs 1901-1918, London, Nelson, 1977. p461-462.

own cognisance.[8] The 'independent' line pursued by Australia and the priority that it placed on developments within its own geographic region was apparent from the beginning. The nature of Australia's dissatisfaction with Great Britain is revealed in Deakin's speech at the colonial conference of 1907, where he complains that:

> "But for the action of Australia and New Zealand, there would not be an island to-day in the Pacific under the British flag. ... Whatever losses there are in the Pacific ... have been due to neglect here [in Britain]. Every single gain has been due to pressure from Australia and New Zealand."[9]

Australia's attitude towards external affairs was strongly determined by geo-political conditions, particularly those affecting its region.[10] In contrast, as a Great Power, Great Britain had broader global interests that were often given priority over the local concerns of remote regions. Neville Meaney explains:

> "Australians resented the attempts by foreign powers to acquire island empires in the South Pacific. They saw them as bases from which attacks could be launched against the Australian mainland and commerce, as unwarranted intermeddling in their own sphere of interests. The British government could not understand how islands up to a thousand or so miles from Australian shores could be regarded as a menace to the colonies. They refused to complicate their international posture by pressing Australian claims."[11]

In contrast, Australia's sense of vulnerability, largely due to its geographic distance from Britain and the other bastions of British power, and its desire for security, weighed heavily on its mind. Australia's preoccupation with regional interests is

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[7] Neville Meaney, The Search For Security In The Pacific 1901-14, Volume 1, A History of Australian Defence and Foreign Policy, 1901-23, Sydney, Sydney University Press, 1976. p9.
[8] Neville Meaney, The Search For Security In The Pacific 1901-14, Volume 1, A History of Australian Defence and Foreign Policy, 1901-23. pp8-9.
[9] Extract from a speech by the Prime Minister of Australia (Mr Alfred Deakin), 9 May 1907, at the Colonial Conference of 1907, C.P.P., 1907-9, Vol. III: 'Colonial Conference, 1907. Minutes of Proceedings', pp. 548-550, reproduced in Gordon Greenwood & Charles Grimshaw, Documents on Australian International Affairs 1901-1918, London, Nelson, 1977. p458.
[10] Neville Meaney, The Search For Security In The Pacific 1901-14, Volume 1, A History of Australian Defence and Foreign Policy, 1901-23. p9.

revealing, in terms of the interests that preoccupy the foreign policy of a medium sized polity. Notwithstanding the fact that Australians had seen themselves as British subjects in a British dominion, their priorities reflected their interests as a medium sized polity, as opposed to those of the great power that was their 'mother country'. The difference in the priorities that guided Australian and British perceptions of strategic interests was a factor that contributed to Australia's nascent sense of nationalism. Australia's disappointment with what appeared to be apathy from Great Britain eventually led to a more independent line in external affairs.

In 1914, on the outbreak of World War I, Australia and Japan moved to capture German colonies in the Pacific. Australia occupied and planted the British flag on German New Guinea in September 1914.[12] While Australia was also concerned about the Japanese expansion in the South Pacific, it "reluctantly acquiesced to the presence of the Japanese in its region under British pressure".[13] After the defeat of Germany, Australia was able to extend its influence over the region when it fought for when it received the mandate, at the post war councils, to administer the German colonies of New Guinea and Nauru.[14] By securing responsibility for the administration of the Pacific Islands south of the equator, Australia acted in its own capacity as a middle power to exclude all powers that could be deemed a threat to its interests. In this instance, these powers included Germany, against whom Australia

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[11] Neville Meaney, The Search For Security In The Pacific 1901-14, Volume 1, A History of Australian Defence and Foreign Policy, 1901-23. p9.
[12] Norman Harper, A Great and Powerful Friend: A Study Of Australian American Relations Between 1900 and 1975, St Lucia, University of Queensland Press, 1987. p23.
[13] Norman Harper, A Great and Powerful Friend: A Study Of Australian American Relations Between 1900 and 1975. pp23-24.
[14] Norman Harper, A Great and Powerful Friend: A Study Of Australian American Relations Between 1900 and 1975. pp31-33.

had just concluded a war, and Japan, which managed to secure the mandate for administering the Pacific Islands north of the equator.[15]

Australian diplomacy following the conclusion of the First World War reflected the classic strategy of a middle power in international relations. First, Australia successfully claimed direct representation at the Peace Conference at Versailles, not withstanding Woodrow Wilsons' initial resistance to this. Second, Australia played a minor role in most of the Conference but adopted an aggressive and prominent role in select areas of interests such as the disposition of the German colonies, racial equality and reparations. Third, Australia adopted a position at the conference that reflected its special concern regarding the impact of the proceedings on its regional interests.

Australia's determination to enforce a 'Monroe Doctrine' in its region of the Pacific in order to assuage its own anxieties about security could be seen in Hughes address to the Council of Ten. The report of the Council of Ten records:

> "The Pacific was not only greater than any other sea, it was a world in itself to which the construction of the Panama Canal had given importance. Strategically the Pacific Islands encompassed Australia like fortresses. New Guinea was the largest island in the whole world, save Australia itself, and was only 82 miles from the mainland. South-east of it was a string of islands suitable for coaling and submarine bases, from which Australia could be attacked. ... If there were at the very door of Australia a potential or actual enemy, Australia could not feel safe. The islands were as necessary to Australia as water to a city. If they were in the hands of a superior power there would be no peace for Australia."[16]

[15] Norman Harper, A Great and Powerful Friend: A Study Of Australian American Relations Between 1900 and 1975. pp23-38.
[16] Norman Harper, A Great and Powerful Friend: A Study Of Australian American Relations Between 1900 and 1975. p30.

The stratagems adopted by Australia to establish the South Pacific region as a special sphere of Australian influence, which led eventually to its stewardship of New Guinea, were symptomatic of a theme that would be repeated. While Australia's regional interests were often not shared by its great power patrons, Australia still had sufficient capacity, as a middle power, to manifest its influence within the South Pacific, so long as it had the acquiescence of the former. Australia's growing assertiveness with respect to its interests in the South Pacific region demonstrated an increasing preparedness to assume greater responsibility and a larger role in the South Pacific region and heralded a significant transition in its attitude towards the region.

The Domain Of A 'Loyal Lieutenant'

Towards the end of the Second World War, Australia began to take a more direct role in the management of its region. During the Second World War, Australia had resented and protested many of the decisions by its Great Power allies.[17] The differences over priorities between Australia and Great Britain, as well as the passing of British Imperial power which culminated in the decision to withdraw from British interests 'East of Suez', led Australia to the conclusion that it had to play a more prominent role in its region's affairs. And this found expression in the Australia-New Zealand Agreement of 1944 or ANZAC pact.

The ANZAC pact represented an institutional arrangement between Australia and New Zealand to defend their mutual interests within a strategic zone that included the

[17] Coral Bell, Dependent Ally: A Study In Australian Foreign Policy. pp21-43.

South Pacific region.[18] This signalled Australia's intent to carve out a regional niche representing a sphere of influence wherein the primacy of Australian interests is recognised and defended,[19] and the ANZAC pact has been described as "the first serious attempt at *middlepowermanship* by Australia, an exercise in regional consultation."[20] Paragraph 13 of the ANZAC pact states:

> "The two governments agree that, within the framework of a general system of world security, a regional zone of defence comprising the South-west and South Pacific areas shall be established and that this zone should be based on Australia and New Zealand, stretching through the arc of islands north and north-east of Australia to Western Samoa and the Cook Islands."

In other words, Australia and New Zealand sought to shift the responsibility for decision-making by the Allied Powers on matters pertaining to the Pacific from London and Washington to Canberra and Wellington. One of the goals of the ANZAC Pact is to enable Australia and New Zealand to secure preponderant influence over the South Pacific region. The Pact challenged the American assumption that the defence of the South Pacific region should revolved around Pearl Harbor.[21]

Australia's ambitions for hegemonic influence within the South Pacific region have been realised by the fact that its own capabilities, coupled with the concurrence of its great power allies, have enabled it to act in a manner akin to a great power. As mentioned earlier, notwithstanding some irritation, Australia's great power allies have largely indulged its ambitions in the South Pacific in the Post War councils

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[18] T.B. Millar, Australia In Peace and War, External Relations Since 1788, second edition, Botany, Maxwell Macmillan, 1991. p278.
[19] Alan & Robin Burnett, The Australia and New Zealand Nexus, Canberra, Australian Institute of International Affairs, 1978. p59.
[20] Norman Harper, A Great and Powerful Friend: A Study Of Australian American Relations Between 1900 and 1975. p129.
[21] Trevor R. Reese, Australia, New Zealand and the United States: A Survey of International Relations 1941/1968, London, Oxford University Press, 1969. p36.

following both World Wars. The sacrifices made by Australia in two World Wars have won it some degree of privileged consideration in the councils of its great power allies.[22] Moreover, with the end of the Second World War, all the remaining metropolitan powers with a territorial presence in the South Pacific region found themselves joined in alliance with one another, thereby reducing the potential for conflict within the region. And as the primary interests of these metropolitan powers lay elsewhere, whereas those of Australia (and New Zealand) lay within the South Pacific region, they offered limited resistance when Australia claimed a leadership role with regard to security and other issues in the South Pacific region.

Australia's ambitions for a role equivalent to that of a hegemon in the South Pacific region have not been matched by faith in its own capabilities to defend itself or its regional interests against an aggressive extra-regional great power. The nature of the ANZAC pact, which called for an arrangement "within the framework of a general system of world security", reveals that while Australia is eager to assume a leading role, it is not prepared to accept unilateral responsibility for regional security. Australia has doubts about its own capability to defend its interests within the region against extra-regional powers. In particular, during the Cold War, Australia was concerned about a threat from the Soviet Union, which had emerged as a global power along with the United States following the Second World War.[23]

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[22] Another significant consideration that influenced Australia's great power allies is Australia's standing within the region among the Pacific Island states, and its influence over the latter. These factors are examined in greater detail later in this chapter as the issues that will be explored overlap with the subsequent discussion on the nature of Australia's relationship with the independent Pacific Island states and are more appropriately covered there.

[23] Joint Intelligence Committee Appreciation 1/47, Melbourne 27 March 1947, 'Appreciation of Certain Aspects of the Strategic Position of Australia', reproduced in Documents on Australian Foreign Policy 1937-49, Volume XII: 1947, W.J. Hudson & Wendy Way (eds.), Canberra, Australian Government Publishing Service, 1995. pp277-278.

Australia has had to reconcile its desire for preponderant influence within the South Pacific region with the recognition of its own limitations, especially if it were to be confronted by an aggressive extra-regional great power. Thus, Australia sees itself as the 'loyal lieutenant' of the Western Alliance, one that would 'hold the fort until the cavalry arrived', in the event of a conflict within Australia's region.[24] To ensure that the 'cavalry' does have an interest in showing up when required, Australia also lobbied strongly for an institutional arrangement that would commit the military forces of the United States, which it recognised as a 'great and powerful friend', to Australia's region. Towards that end, Australia sought to establish itself (and New Zealand) as a 'Main Support Area' for its great power allies, the United Kingdom and the United States.[25]

Australia had initially sought to commit the United States to participation in 'an overall defence arrangement' for the Western Pacific after the latter had expressed an interest in 1946 to maintain a military base at Manus over which Australia had jurisdiction.[26] However, that attempt failed.[27] As with Great Britain in an earlier period, Australia has to confront the fact that the United States is a great power and that the South Pacific represented but one of its many global interests. It was not until 1951 that the United States finally agreed to a formal 'regional' security pact in the Pacific with Australia and New Zealand.[28] In securing the ANZUS Treaty, Australia again manifested the characteristics of a middle power. As it did previously in the post war councils following the First World War, Australia demonstrated its

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[24] 'An Appreciation By The Chief Of Staff Of The Strategic Position Of Australia', September 1947, extracts reproduced in Documents on Australian Foreign Policy 1937-49, Volume XII: 1947, W.J. Hudson & Wendy Way (eds.), Canberra, Australian Government Publishing Service, 1995. pp292-294

[25] 'An Appreciation By The Chief Of Staff Of The Strategic Position Of Australia'. pp296-297.

[26] Trevor R. Reese, Australia, New Zealand and the United States: A Survey of International Relations 1941/1968. p54.

[27] Trevor R. Reese, Australia, New Zealand and the United States: A Survey of International Relations 1941/1968. pp53-61.

ability to lobby strongly and successfully for the ANZUS Treaty and again highlighted the fact that, as a middle power, its interests could not be easily ignored.[29] Thus, Australia was able to press its demands for the ANZUS treaty, in the face of American reluctance, in exchange for its acquiescence to America's wish to offer generous peace terms for Japan in the Post World War II settlements.[30] To some Australian eyes,[31] the ANZUS Treaty represented a formal commitment of American military assistance to Australia in the event of a military threat to the latter, as well as an institutional security arrangement that protected the geographic region surrounding Australia.[32]

Decolonisation And The Cold War

The preceding arguments highlighted two distinctive periods with regard to Australia's role in the South Pacific region. In both, Australia claimed a high degree of national interests in the South Pacific region. In the first, Australia was a member of the British Empire and its interests were the most directly engaged by developments in the South Pacific region. In the second, Australia was a middle power and a member of the Western Alliance, and it perceived its interests as being best defended by regional security arrangements that were integrated within a global security framework. In both these instances, Australia's role and claim to influence in the South Pacific region have been based on its relationship with extra-regional

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[28] Trevor R. Reese, Australia, New Zealand and the United States: A Survey of International Relations 1941/1968. pp107-125.

[29] For a detailed study of Australia's efforts to secure the ANZUS Treaty, see Coral Bell, Dependent Ally: A Study In Australian Foreign Policy.

[30] Coral Bell, Dependent Ally: A Study In Australian Foreign Policy. p49.

[31] The US might have a different interpretation of ANZUS. The US could read its obligation "to consult" with Australia, in the event of an attack on the latter, literally, as opposed to a commitment to come to its defence.

powers, especially metropolitan powers with territorial possessions within the region. Indeed, as the entire South Pacific region was subject to colonial influence at the time, Australia had to engaged the metropolitan powers within the South Pacific region and to account for their interests in order to achieve its own ambitions.

The decolonisation of the Pacific Island states following the end of the Second World War and the advent of the Cold War redirected the focus of Australian diplomacy in the South Pacific region. The independence of the Pacific Island states meant the emergence of new polities that Australia had to engage if it desired to retain a significant role within the region and the Cold War lent urgency to Australia's ambition for regional influence. In its efforts to address these issues, Australia had to reconcile two different roles. The first is Australia's ability to continue in its role as a 'loyal lieutenant' of the Western Alliance, one that is capable of defending the interests of its allies as well as its own, within the South Pacific region. The second is Australia's ability to engage the newly independent Pacific Island states, as juridical peers, without sacrificing its leadership role or its capacity to exercise influence over developments within the South Pacific region. While these two roles are not necessarily incompatible, there have been many instances where they conflict. Australia's capacity to resolve the tension between these two roles has been a critical factor in its success as an effective middle power in the South Pacific region.

In respect of Australia's ambition to represent Western interests in the South Pacific region, there has been little change following decolonisation. While the decolonisation of the Pacific Island states introduced 'new' actors to the South Pacific region that Australia had to engage, this did not diminish Australian

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[32] Coral Bell, Dependent Ally: A Study In Australian Foreign Policy. p52.

ambitions for significant influence over regional developments or its claims to a leadership role in the region. Indeed, it can be argued that the independence of the Pacific Island states reinforced Australia's claim to a sphere of influence in the South Pacific region. And that the high degree of asymmetry in power between the independent Pacific Island states and Australia allowed the latter to perpetuate its role as a 'loyal lieutenant' of the Western Alliance within the region more effectively.

Australia might have been less successful in maintaining a dominant role in the South Pacific region if not for fact that, as a middle power, it is able to inspire the confidence of its allies in its ability to defend their interests within the region, as well as its own. As a wealthy middle power in a region comprising small and relatively weak states, confidence in Australia's capacity for influence in the South Pacific may be founded on several factors. These include the vast disparity in terms of power between Australia and its Pacific Island neighbours, the considerable amount of bilateral aid that Australia provides to the independent states in the region, and the financial assistance and other support that Australia gives to regional institutions in the South Pacific. While Australia's role, with respect to the Pacific Island states is examined in greater detail later in this chapter, a brief review here helps to clarify the willingness of Australia's more powerful allies to recognise Australia's special influence over the South Pacific region.

From a structuralist perspective, Australia may be perceived as a regional hegemon. The asymmetries of power between Australia and the other states in the South Pacific region are obvious. Australia's population is three times greater than the combined population of the independent Pacific Island states, which is estimated to be around 6

million people.[33] Australia is a wealthy developed nation with abundant natural resources. In contrast, economic self-sufficiency, as modern independent states, has always been a serious issue confronting most of the Pacific Island states. The average per capita income of the Pacific Islanders is around US$1,000/-, and ranges from US$7,000/- on the phosphate rich island of Nauru to US$700/- on Kiribati and Tuvalu.[34] Australia also possesses military resources superior to all the independent Pacific Island states combined. Of the independent Pacific Island states, only Fiji, Papua New Guinea, Tonga, and Vanuatu maintained military or para-military forces.[35] Fiji has about 5,000 men under arms, Papua New Guinea has 3,000, Vanuatu has 300, and Tonga has 200.[36] Thus, there is ample justification, at least from a structuralist perspective, to assume that Australia is well able to defend the interests of its allies as well as its own within the South Pacific region.

In terms of security related interests, the independent Pacific Islands states have never been considered a military threat to a middle power like Australia.[37] Indeed, the independent Pacific Island states have come to depend on Australia for assistance in aerial and maritime surveillance of their sovereign jurisdiction. A example of this is the Niue Treaty on Co-operation in Fisheries Surveillance and Law Enforcement in the South Pacific Region, which represents an institutional arrangement whereby Australia furnishes the Pacific Island states with the capacity to conduct maritime surveillance and other crucial policing functions within their territorial waters.[38] This is a capacity that some Pacific Island states might not have otherwise possessed

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[33] Europa Yearbook 1997.
[34] Europa Yearbook 1997.
[35] Henry S. Albinski, Robert C. Kiste, Richard Herr, Ross Babbage, & Denis McLean, The South Pacific: Political, Economic, and Military Trends, Special Report 1989, Washington, Brassey's (US), Inc., 1989. pviii.
[36] Europa Yearbook 1997.
[37] 'Joint Intelligence Committee Appreciation 1/47'. pp277-278.
[38] See Niue Treaty on Cooperation in Fisheries Surveillance and Law Enforcement in the South Pacific Region, Done at Honiara, 9 July 1992.

without Australian funding and assistance in providing 6 naval patrol boats, along with expert advisors, technical support and training.

Australia also exercises considerable influence in the region through its economic relationship with the independent Pacific Island states and provides preferential access to South Pacific exports under the South Pacific Regional Trade and Economic Cooperation Agreement (SPARTECA). In 1991-2, Australia exported A$4,383 million to the South Pacific Forum countries, while importing A$3,527.8 million.[39] Another significant issue pertaining to trade between Australia and the independent Pacific Island states is spelled out by Australia's Joint Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade in a report, which states:

> "Australia has had extensive commercial contacts with the South Pacific for over a century, with Australian companies trading and investing widely in the region. Australia, by virtue of its size, proximity, resources and development, is of major economic significance [to the Pacific Island states]. However, from Australia's point of view, trade with the region is a comparatively small proportion of Australia's total trade."[40]

While there is no suggestion of compulsion, the nature of the long-established economic relationship between some Pacific Island states and Australia is such that it has become akin to 'structural dependence' on the much larger Australian economy.[41] This is partly a consequence of the historical links between Australia and the Pacific Island states, where Australian investment, especially in the civil aviation infrastructure within the South Pacific, has linked many South Pacific economies to

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[39] Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Annual Report 1992-93, Canberra, Australia Government Publishing, 1994. p61

[40] Joint Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade, Australia's Relations With The South Pacific. p34.

[41] Greg Johannes, An Isolated Debating Society: Australia In Southeast Asia And The South Pacific, Canberra, Strategic and Defence Studies Centre, 1992. p8.

Australia's.[42] Therefore, in view of its significant role with respect to the security of, as well as the economies within, the South Pacific region, Australia may be regarded as being well placed to protect the interests of its allies as well as its own. Thus, Australia's ambition to play a direct role in establishing a sphere of influence for itself (within the context of the security arrangements under the rubric of the Western Alliance) did not end with decolonisation in the South Pacific region. Instead, Australia's leadership role has simply been manifested differently as a consequence of the need to engage independent states, as opposed to colonies, within the South Pacific region.

Decolonisation altered many of Australia's previous assumptions about the South Pacific region and the independence of the Pacific Island states introduced new issues and revived old fears that had to be addressed. While the South Pacific region might have, in the brief period following the end of the Second World War, been considered a Western lake, that assumption could no longer be taken for granted with the independence of the Pacific Island states and their assertion of sovereignty over those waters. The Cold War introduced a new adversary in the Soviet Union and the vulnerability of the small but independent Pacific Island states to the influence of the former reawakened Australian (and American) fears that the South Pacific region might once again represent a security threat.

The independence of a growing number of Pacific Island states from the 1970s initiated a change in the manner in which Australia expressed its interests in the South Pacific region. The depiction of the South Pacific as a region where Australia acted as an overt hegemon with responsibilities for 'native peoples' underwent a

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[42] Greg Johannes, An Isolated Debating Society: Australia In Southeast Asia And The South Pacific. p8.

radical transformation in terms of mindset and language. Instead, Australia began to describe and perceive its relationship with the independent Pacific Island states as 'comprehensive engagement', according the latter the respect due to sovereign states, even they were not its equal in power.[43] However, the perception of the South Pacific as a region of vital strategic significance to Australia and the need to 'deny' the region to potentially hostile powers remained unchanged as the guiding principles of Australian policy. An abiding concern about minor powers, like the Pacific Island states, is the fear that:

> "...their physical and economic vulnerability, together with the fact that they are often strategically located in the Caribbean, Indian and Pacific Oceans, [might be regarded as] a standing invitation to outside intervention and thus a threat to 'global security'."[44]

In particular, Australia (and the United States) had been anxious about the vulnerability of the Pacific Islands states and their susceptibility to Soviet influence during the Cold War. There was concern that the Soviet Union might be able to gain access to a Pacific Island base and secure a foothold in a strategic position within the South Pacific region from which it could threaten Australian (and Western) interests.

Australia has always been apprehensive about the fact that the islands belonging to its South Pacific neighbours may be used as a platform for an attack on Australia by a hostile major power. Ramesh Thakur explains:

> "The Pacific islands could be used as stepping stones for an invasion of Australia from the northern and northeastern approaches to the continent. The country's security interests are therefore most directly engaged in the island states of Melanesia. But Australia, in partnership with its US ally, also has a vital

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[43] See Gareth Evans, Australia's Regional Security, Ministerial Statement by Senator the Hon. Gareth Evans QC, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade, Australian Government Publishing Service, Canberra, 1989.

[44] G.R. Berridge, International Politics: States, Power & Conflict Since 1945, Third Edition, New York, Prentice Hall, 1997. p19.

> interest in securing the long and exposed sea and air lanes of communication across the Pacific vastness. This is obviously important for Australia's commercial interests as well. The most important security goal for Australia and New Zealand in the South Pacific has been the strategic denial of the region to the Soviet Union."[45]

The memories of Japan's ability to threaten the security of the Australian continent from Pacific Island bases during the Second World War also lingered in the minds of many strategic planners.[46] Consequently, Australia is strongly mindful of the need to prevent control of or access to naval facilities on any of the Pacific Island states by a hostile power that might threaten Australian interests. The need to keep the lines of communication between Australia and the United States safe and secure is also of paramount importance.[47] Towards these ends, Australia advocated a policy of 'strategic denial'.[48] However, the challenge for Australia in keeping the South Pacific a 'Western lake' is the fact that it can no longer declare "hands off" as if it were still a colonial overlord. Instead, Australia has to woo the independent Pacific Island states into accommodating its interests.

Australia As A Great And Powerful Friend

Australia's effectiveness as a middle power in the South Pacific region should be understood in the context of the geopolitical factors peculiar to the region where

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[45] Ramesh Thakur (ed.), The South Pacific: Problems, Issue and Prospects, London, Macmillan, 1991. p20

[46] Gary Smith, Micronesia: Decolonialisation and US Military Interests in the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands, Canberra, Australian National University, 1991. p16.

[47] Jim Sanday, South Pacific Culture and Politics: Notes on Current Issues, working paper no. 174, Canberra, Strategic and Defence Studies Centre, 1988. p14.

[48] Richard A. Herr, 'The Soviet Union in the South Pacific,' in The Soviet Union as an Asian Power: Implications of Gorbachev's 1986 Vladivostok Initiative, Ramesh Thakur & Carlyle A. Thayer (eds.), Melbourne, Macmillan, 1987. The policy of 'strategic denial' has also been described by critics as 'strategic neocolonialism' – see Peter King, 'Redefining South Pacific Security: Greening and Domestic', in The South Pacific: Problems, Issue and Prospects, Ramesh Thakur (ed.), London, Macmillan, 1991. p48.

asymmetries of power allow Australia to assume a role akin to that of a great power among much smaller states.[49] As a middle power, Australia is able to pursue a strategy to inspire loyalty among the independent Pacific Island states towards itself, as well as to initiate and support regional arrangements within which it can assume a role as the dominant partner. Australia's capacity to accomplish both these goals successfully has been the measure of its effectiveness as a middle power in the South Pacific region.

Australia's role as a great and powerful friend to the region is premised upon the relative weakness of the Pacific Island states and the limitations that the latter must confront in meeting the obligations of a modern sovereign state. As briefly alluded to earlier, the independent Pacific Island possess limited resources and the disparity between their means and their obligations as sovereign states is nowhere more evident than in the example of maritime jurisdiction. The extent of the challenges confronting the independent Pacific Island states may be illustrated by the impact of the United Nations Law of the Sea on the former. Article 56 of the Law of the Sea states that:

> 1. In the exclusive economic zone, the coastal State has:
> (a) sovereign rights for the purpose of exploring and exploiting, conserving and managing the natural resources, whether living or non-living, of the waters superjacent to the sea-bed and of the sea-bed and its subsoil, and with regard to other activities for the economic exploitation and exploration of the zone, such as the production of energy from the water, currents and winds.

The principle of extending sovereign jurisdiction over land to include adjacent seas; first as international customary law during the negotiation of the Law of the Sea; and subsequently as international law when the Law of the Sea Convention came into

[49] See discussions in Chapter 2 on Structural Perspectives of Middle Powers.

force in 1994, resulted in widespread maritime claims.[50] International law provided minor powers with the opportunity to legally claim up to 200 nm of Exclusive Economic Zone in their adjacent waters, as well as protected their rights with respect to those maritime claims. These changes in international maritime law saw a large portion of previously unclaimed Ocean pass into the sovereign jurisdiction of the small but independent island states within the South Pacific region.

Attributes of the Independent Pacific Island states[51]

States (independent)	Land Area (sq. km)	Sea Area (sq. km)	Population	GNP (US million)
Fiji	18,376	1,290,000	588, 068	1, 785
Kiribati	690	3,550,000	72, 335	56
Nauru	21	320,000	8, 042	80.7
Papua New Guinea	461,691	3,120,000	4, 074, 000	4, 857
Solomon Islands	28,530	1,340,000	196, 823	291
Tonga	699	700,000	94, 649	160
Tuvalu	26	9,000,000	8, 229	9
Vanuatu	11,880	680,000	142, 944	189
Western Samoa	2,934	120,000	161, 298	163
Total	524,847	20,120,000	5, 346, 388	7, 590.7

Figures from Europa Yearbook 1997 and Ramesh Thakur (ed.), The South Pacific: Problems, Issue and Prospects, London, Macmillan.[52]

The vast expanse of their maritime possessions, relative to their land and population, became a distinguishing characteristic of the Pacific Island states and highlights the formidable challenge that they must confront in meeting their sovereign responsibilities. Dorrance makes the observation that:

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[50] The previous regime established by customary international law was that no state could claim jurisdiction over waters that lay beyond the range of its artillery, and convention established a 3-mile limit on the territorial sea.

[51] This list only includes states that are fully independent and has excluded some Pacific Island states that are members of the United Nations because they are 'freely-associated states. States in free-association with metropolitan powers are self-governing but rely on the latter for defence and some degree of foreign representation.

> "In contrast to lilliputian land areas, the Pacific islands' exclusive economic zones (EEZs) blanket 11.6 million square miles of the Pacific. One of the smallest states, Kiribati, has an EEZ equal in size to all of Western Europe."[53]

To meet the obligations of a coastal state as required under the terms of the Law of the Sea would stretch the resources of the Pacific Island states. Indeed, many of them might have difficulty simply exploiting the sovereign rights to the maritime claims that they are entitled to – profitably. The jurisdiction over these new maritime territories, including the sovereign rights to marine resources in the 200 nm Exclusive Economic Zone, comes with burdensome obligations for the Pacific Island states. This includes the responsibility to preserve and protect the marine environment, and to conserve marine species.[54] Such responsibilities require substantial resources to fulfil and it would be beyond the capability of many Pacific Island states, characterised by small populations and geographic isolation, to meet these obligations unilaterally.

The gap between the capabilities of the Pacific Islands and their obligations as sovereign states provides an opportunity for Australia to play a significant role as a middle power in the South Pacific region. The independence of the Pacific Island states and their assumption of sovereignty over waters that were hitherto regarded as a 'Western Lake' became a matter of strong interest to Australia. In the words of the Australian Foreign Affairs Record:

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[52] It should be noted that the many of the figures for population and GNP are forward estimates and should be treated as an approximation.
[53] John C. Dorrance, The United States and the Pacific Islands, Westport, Praeger, 1992. p6.
[54] Edward P. Wolfers, 'The Law of the Sea and Security in the South Pacific', Maritime Studies, 77, July/August 1994, pp22-29. See also United Nations Law of the Sea, Articles 24, 25, 56, and 61, pertaining to some of the primary responsibilities of a sovereign state with respect to its territorial sea and exclusive economic zone.

> "... from a map in which the great spaces of the ocean were separated or differentiated by tiny points of land with names attached to them, you suddenly had a map where huge areas of the earth's surface were marked off as areas of claim or potential sovereign claim by political entities most of which were virtually unknown to the outside world. It was a most striking transformation. And it seemed to all of us contemplating that transformation that this was something that was going to change not only the resources and sovereignty map of the South Pacific but was going to change its political importance and its strategic importance to us."[55]

To appreciate Australia's interests with respect to the independent Pacific Island states and the subsequent discussion, two factors guiding its role should be highlighted. Australia's desire to play a role in assisting the independent Pacific Island states with their obligations is consistent with the recurrent theme in its proprietary attitude towards its immediate geographic region, which was first expressed as 'hands off' and more recently reincarnated as 'strategic denial'. This infers a mindset which takes the view that if any state is going to play a role in assisting with the development or obligations of the Pacific Island states and thereby derive influence through any ensuing feelings of gratitude or loyalty, then that state should be Australia.

A concurrent theme in Australia's relationship with its less developed neighbours in the South Pacific region is a growing sense of its responsibilities as a rich developed nation and a good international citizen. This has been manifested in terms of bilateral support for the Pacific Island states and strong support for multilateral regional institutions for altruistic reasons as well as to defend more self-serving national interests.

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[55] 'Partners, Friends and Allies: Australia and the Pacific,' in Australian Foreign Affairs Record 56,

General Characteristics Of Australia's Bilateral Relations With The Pacific Island States

The comprehensive extent and depth of Australia's bilateral relations with the independent Pacific Island states is one of the significant aspects of its foreign policy towards the South Pacific region. Australia maintains a formal diplomatic presence in every independent Pacific Island state. Australia's strong presence in a region that is geographically remote from major political and economic hubs argues an ardent commitment on its part to the region and reinforces its role as a surrogate for the other Western powers, which maintain a less active diplomatic presence.

Australia's strong presence within the region also enables some Pacific Island states, which lack the resources to maintain a diplomatic establishment in Canberra, to have regular access to the Australian government, as well as serve as an intermediary between them and other states. Australia's 'constructive commitment' to the Pacific Island states is premised upon the belief that:

> "As relations between Australia and the region become increasingly complex, it will be very important for Australia to have in place people with some understanding of the dynamics of the region, and hopefully, a strong appreciation of the aspirations and motivations of the individual countries. The importance of strong personal contacts cannot be over emphasised. Diplomatic staff, having established personal links at some future date to reactivate their contacts and build on their expertise in the region."[56]

Australia's capacity, as a middle power, to establish an extensive network of personal contacts throughout the South Pacific region also ensures that it is kept well informed about regional developments. In particular, this 'intelligence network' enhances Australia's capacity to exercise influence, both formally and informally,

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September 1985. p.820.

within the South Pacific region, especially when it is privy to information that states who have less resources or who are less well-connected might lack.

The effectiveness of Australia's influence within the region is indicated by the fact that Australia can usually count on the diplomatic support of the Pacific Island states in international forums. I.M. Cumpston notes that:

> "In the UN Australia [is] able to correlate the policies of the island states, so that [it] could usually rely on the votes of 8 to 10 of them."[57]

Thus, to Australia, the Pacific Island states represent important allies, especially in Third World Forums. At the very least, Australia's influence over the Pacific Island states might be counted upon to mute their expression of opposition even when they do disagree with Australia on issues. Australia's resistance to common targets for the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions was, for example, not attacked by the Pacific Island states at Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) in 1996. The restraint demonstrated by the Pacific Island states in not challenging Australia's position on greenhouse gas emissions was noteworthy as they were among the most vocal in supporting the development of international regimes to mitigate the consequences of global warming.

Another characteristic of Australia's relationship with the Pacific Island states, and arguably the most obvious and frequently cited, is the fact that Australia is a major aid donor to the developing nations in the South Pacific region. The Pacific Island states have limited financial resources and this meant that they faced substantial

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[56]Joint Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade, Australia's Relations With The South Pacific. p34.
[57] I.M. Cumpston, History of Australian Foreign Policy 1901-1991, Volume Two, Canberra, 1995. p370.

difficulties in providing for the growing expectations of their people, including the demand for tertiary education programmes, medical facilities that provide more than basic health care, and other modern amenities.[58] Many of the primary industries of the Pacific Island states, including timber and minerals exploitation, have limited potential in that they are non-sustainable or non-renewable.[59]

The heavy reliance on a few industries based on resource extraction also renders the Pacific Island states vulnerable, especially as many of these industries may be established elsewhere at lower cost. The isolation of the South Pacific Islands and their small populations handicaps the development of many industries. Industries such as tourism provide valuable foreign exchange for the South Pacific region but as yet their potential remains largely unfulfilled.[60] Thus far, the only independent Pacific Island states that derive significant income from tourism are the Cook Islands, Fiji and Vanuatu.[61] The Pacific Island states are also vulnerable to international political and economic events, not to mention devastating meteorological forces that wreak enormous and costly damage. These are factors that have rendered many, if not all, of the Pacific Island states heavily reliant on remittances and foreign aid.[62]

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[58] Bruce Knapman, 'Economic development and dependency', in Tides of History: The Pacific Islands in the Twentieth Century, K.R. Howe, Robert C. Kiste, & Brij V. Lal (eds.), St Leonard's, Allen & Unwin, 1994. p326.

[59] A problem that confronted the Republic of Nauru after its phosphate deposits were depleted. Nauru's economy had been based almost entirely on the extraction of phosphates, which provided up to A$100-120 million annually since its independence in 1968. However, the phosphate deposits were almost completely depleted by the 1990s, and Nauru has had to find alternative sources of revenue. Europa Yearbook 1997. pp768-771.

[60] The South Pacific territories of the metropolitan powers in the South Pacific, like Norfolk Island or French Polynesia, have reasonably well developed tourism industries, but except for Fiji and Vanuatu, the tourism potential of the independent Pacific Island states have been limited or unrealised. See Europa Yearbook 1997. pp716-855.

[61] Robert C. Kiste, 'The Island States as Actors in the Region', in Henry S. Albinski, Robert C. Kiste, Richard Herr, Ross Babbage, & Denis McLean, The South Pacific: Political, Economic, and Military Trends, Special Report 1989, Washington, Brassey's (US), Inc., 1989. p11.

[62] For a discussion on the economic limitations of the Pacific Island states, see Bruce Knapman, 'Economic development and dependency', in Tides of History: The Pacific Islands in the Twentieth Century, K.R. Howe, Robert C. Kiste, & Brij V. Lal (eds.), St Leonard's, Allen & Unwin, 1994.

Australia's capacity, as a middle power, to assist with the needs of the Pacific Island states supports its ambitions to assume a role of significant influence within the region. In 1982, Australia replaced Britain as the principal aid donor to the independent Pacific Island states.[63] While Australian aid to the Pacific Island states has been ostensibly for humanitarian reasons, it is apparent that the provision of bilateral development aid and other forms of assistance has also bought Australia considerable influence within the South Pacific region. Moreover, the fact that Australia provides high levels of aid enables it to influence the nature and implementation of development programmes in the South Pacific region. Thus, Australian aid has served its interests in trade, maritime surveillance, intelligence, sustainable development and other issues in the South Pacific region.[64]

Total Australian Aid Flows To The South Pacific 1997-1998[65]

Country	A$million
Fiji	19.7
Vanuatu	12.9
Solomon Islands	11.1
Samoa	11
Tonga	10
Kiribati	6
Tuvalu	2.4
Federated States of Micronesia	1.3
Cook Islands	1.7
Palau	0.3
Marshall Islands	0.6

pp325-336. Andrew Elek, 'The South Pacific economies in a changing international environment', in Rodney V. Cole & Somsak Tambunlertchai (eds.), Future of the Asia-Pacific Economies: Pacific Islands at the Crossroads? Australia, Asian and Pacific Development Center, 1993. pp56-78. South Pacific Commission, Regional Conference on Economic Development Planning, Suva, Fiji, 24-28 October 1977, Noumea, South Pacific Commission, 1978. And also Gary Wiseman, 'Key Issues of the Pacific Island Economies', in Rodney V. Cole & Somsak Tambunlertchai (eds.), Future of the Asia-Pacific Economies: Pacific Islands at the Crossroads?, Australia, Asian and Pacific Development Center, 1993. p21-24.

[63] Greg Fry, 'Australia and the South Pacific', in Diplomacy in the Market Place: Australia in World Affairs, P.J. Boyce & J.R. Angel (eds.), Melbourne, Cheshire, 1992. p10.

[64] Joint Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade, Australia's Relations With The South Pacific. p76.

[65] Figures exclude Australian aid to Papua New Guinea, which amounted to about A$319.2 million in the same period. 'Papua New Guinea: Country Brief', www.ausaid.gov.au

Niue & Tokelau	0.9
New Caledonia	1.4
Nauru	2.9
French Polynesia	0.4
Regional Programmes	42.1
Total	**124.7**

Source: The South Pacific: An Overview, www.ausaid.gov.au

A noteworthy point is the fact that while Australia is a major contributor of bilateral overseas development aid to the Pacific Island states, the major proportion of that aid has been directed towards Papua New Guinea. In terms of overall development aid to the rest of the region, Australia is only second to Japan in terms of contribution. This relative 'decline' (in terms of Australia's aid contributions relative to Japan) has led some to suggest that Australian influence in the region might be diminishing.[66] However, direct bilateral development aid is merely one of a number of factors upon which Australian influence in the South Pacific is based. And it does not include the cost of other forms of assistance, such as preferential access to Australian markets, employment (and consequently remittances from Australia), technical and other administrative advice.

In summary, Australia's preparedness and capacity, as a middle power, to engage the independent Pacific Island states in comprehensive bilateral relationships enables it to exercise significant influence over the latter. The fact that many of the independent Pacific Island states are dependent on the support of aid, coupled with the fact that Australia is in a position to supply that assistance as a wealthy middle power, simply amplifies the influence of the latter. In this respect, Australia's role in the South Pacific accords with the expectations of structuralist perspectives, which

[66] Greg Johannes, An Isolated Debating Society: Australia In Southeast Asia And The South Pacific. pp8-9. Japan's influence is discussed later in this chapter.

predict hegemonic influence for middle powers in geopolitical situations where they are able to capitalise on their relative superiority in power to smaller states. However, structuralist perspectives fall short in their ability to satisfactorily account for factors that might render a middle power like Australia unwilling or unable to resort to the use of its power in a coercive fashion. These factors are examined in the following sections and include Australia's preference for multilateral institutional arrangements that are more in keeping with the broader self-interests of a middle power, as well as the recognition that attempts at coercion might jeopardise its interests by alienating the independent Pacific Island states.

Australia's Role In Regional Multilateral Institutions

Australia's ambition to maintain a leadership role within the South Pacific region is visibly manifested in the fact that its influence may be felt in most, if not all, of the multilateral institutional arrangements that purport to represent regional interests. Australia's role as a middle power within the South Pacific region is perhaps best defined by its capacity to shape regional developments and to defend its interests, without alienating the independent Pacific Island states, through regional multilateral institutions.

The establishment of regional forums has long been regarded by Australia as an opportunity "to have a suitable voice in the determination of policy and the shaping of events which deeply affect Australia wherever they may take place."[67] Australia's leanings towards formal institutional arrangements may be traced back to its efforts to establish the ANZAC Pact and the South Seas Commission. As with its bilateral

relations with the Pacific Island states, Australia's role in the multilateral institutional arrangements for the South Pacific region is underscored by a sense of self-interest and altruism. Thus, while regional arrangements, such as ANZAC are prompted primarily by security interests, it might be argued that other initiatives for regional institutions are less self-serving. And that Australia's efforts to establish regional bodies like the South Seas Commission (subsequently created as the South Pacific Commission), have been prompted by the desire to promote greater collaboration among the metropolitan powers to improve the welfare of the 'native peoples in the South West Pacific'[68]

Australia has initiated, as well as supported, the establishment of many multilateral institutional arrangements in the South Pacific region. Among the more significant initiatives supported by Australia have been the South Pacific Commission, the South Pacific Forum, the Forum Fisheries Agency and the South Pacific Nuclear Free Zone. Australia has consistently provided a large share of the funding requirements for multilateral institutional arrangements in the South Pacific region.[69] In the year 1997-98, Australia provided up to A$42.1 million in aid to regional programmes in the South Pacific.[70] Australia's preparedness to underwrite South Pacific regional institutions is demonstrated as early as 1947 when it agreed to provide a third of the funding required for the operation of the South Pacific Commission, which became the first regional organisation in the South Pacific. Australia has also been one of the major financial backers of the South Pacific Forum and, together with New Zealand, provides up to two-thirds of the funding required by

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[67] Percy Claude Spender, Minister for External Affairs (1950), cited in Trevor R. Reese, Australia, New Zealand and the United States: A Survey of International Relations 1941/1968. p119.

[68] Minute from T.A. Pyman, First Secretary, Pacific Division, Department of External Affairs, to John W. Burton, Secretary, Department of External Affairs, reproduced in Documents on Australian Foreign Policy 1937-49, Volume XII: 1947, W.J. Hudson & Wendy Way (eds.), Canberra, Australian Government Publishing Service, 1995. p834.

the Forum. Australian financial support is also extended to many other regional institutions and programmes.

Australian support for regional institutions and programmes is not confined to financial aid but also includes technical advice, training, logistical support and many other forms of assistance. Australia, in conjunction with the World Health Organisation, assisted with the training of health care workers in the South Pacific, provided consultants, and support for the maintenance of a regional virology testing centre.[71] Australia has also mobilised its defence forces to support the efforts of the Natural Disasters Organisation and respond to regional requests for assistance following natural disasters.[72] Therefore, as with its bilateral relations with the Pacific Island states, Australia's engagement with South Pacific regional institutions and programmes has been comprehensive.

As with the other issues discussed earlier, the decolonisation of the Pacific Island states and the Cold War are two factors that have coloured Australia's role in multilateral institutional arrangements within the South Pacific region. To some extent, Australia's support for regional multilateral institutional arrangements in the South Pacific has been guided by its strategic interest in reducing the vulnerability of the Pacific Island states. Australia's self-interest is reflected in its belief that such regional arrangements would fortify the regional identity of the Pacific Island states. And that this, coupled with the capacity building potential of regional institutions, reduces the likelihood that the small but independent states within the South Pacific

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[69] Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Annual Report 1992-93. p61
[70] http://www.ausaid.gov.au
[71] Joint Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade, Australia's Relations With The South Pacific. p112.
[72] Joint Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade, Australia's Relations With The South Pacific. pp118-120.

region might succumb to the influence of extra-regional powers that are hostile to Australia. Thus, it is argued that:

> "The Australian (and allied) strategy of denial in the South Pacific has relied not only on discouraging external power military activity in the region, but especially on reducing the economic, political, and social vulnerability of island states to external interference. Australia's objectives in the region have been to build economic stability and resilience, to foster peaceful and democratic processes of decolonization and political evolution, and to facilitate regional consultation and cooperation. To these ends, Canberra has played a central role in establishing, and supporting the work of, the South Pacific Forum, the most important venue for regional political consultation, and the other regional organisations, most of which promote economic development. Through these and related means, Australia seeks to build a sense of regional community, widely shared interests, effective problem-solving mechanisms, and political stability – and in this positive way keep out unwanted external intervention."[73]

Similar arguments are expressed in the Report of the Committee on Australia's Relations with the Third Word:

> "Australia's main interests in the island states of the South West Pacific involve security considerations. Because it is very important from Australia's point of view that the United States maintains its strategic advantage over its superpower rival in the general Pacific area, we wish to avoid a situation where any of the independent states becomes susceptible to predominant influence by the Soviet Union. Disproportionately prominent activity in the areas by China is also undesirable, both in itself and because it would most likely induce the Soviet Union to seek to establish countervailing influence. In this sense, the achievement of independence by a number of small, economically weak and fragile island societies, though welcome in itself, carries strategic implications which Australia and its allies cannot afford to ignore. *One motivation for Australia's active support for the South Pacific Forum and other forms of sub-regional collaboration is to encourage a sense of collective identity among these small countries, which may serve to lessen their vulnerability to inimical external influence.*" [my emphasis][74]

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[73] Henry S. Albinski, Robert C. Kiste, Richard Herr, Ross Babbage, & Denis McLean, The South Pacific: Political, Economic, and Military Trends, Special Report 1989, Washington, Brassey's (US), Inc., 1989. pviii.

Therefore, Australia's strong and comprehensive role in South Pacific regional institutions is consistent with two of its long standing objectives, the perpetuation of its leadership in the region and the exclusion of rival powers from the region.

In contrast to the motives discussed above, Australia's support for regional institutions in the South Pacific is also prompted by more altruistic reasons. This is revealed in Australia's recognition that such regional institutions can also assist the Pacific Island states to exploit the gains derived from economies of scale and to enhance their capacity to defend their common interests against others. Regional multilateral institutional arrangements can and have enabled individual Pacific Island states to overcome their inherent weaknesses. Regional institutions such as the University of the South Pacific, which provides tertiary level education, allowed states to overcome the limitations of cost through economies of scale and to provide services that they might not otherwise be able to afford on their own. Australia routinely provides financial assistance and other resources to such institutions. Therefore, it may be argued that a curious but not incompatible mix of self-interest and altruism defines Australia's role as a middle power patron of South Pacific regional institutions.

Self-Interest And Altruism In The Forum Fisheries Forum

A good example of Australia's role as a middle power in South Pacific regional institutions is the part that it has played in the development and achievements of the Forum Fisheries Forum (FFA). The FFA was created in 1979 as a sub-regional organisation to deal with the fisheries related issues that are so important to the

[74] Report of the Committee on Australia's Relations with the Third World, Australia and the Third

Pacific Island states. And from the inauguration of the FFA, Australia has played a pivotal guiding role in its operations. Australia provided crucial financial and logistical support to help sustain the operations of the FFA, including up to a third of the core budget for the FFA, assistance with maritime and aerial surveillance, as well as maintenance, training and patrol boats for policing functions.[75] However, it was Australia's role and influence in the deliberations of the FFA over the membership of the United States in the FFA and the subsequent dispute with the United States over the issue of tuna fisheries in the South Pacific that highlighted its effectiveness as a middle power.

A recurrent issue for Australia's foreign policy has been the tension between self-interest and altruism. Australia has to reconcile its role as a great and powerful friend to the Pacific Island states with its obligation to defend the interests of its own great and powerful friends, especially the United States. As discussed earlier, Australia had claimed a role as the *de facto* standard bearers for Western interests in the South Pacific region.[76] However, this role is strained whenever the interests of the Pacific Island states conflicted with those of Australia's traditional allies.

When the proposal for a regional fisheries agency was raised at the Ninth South Pacific Forum in Niue, one of the primary issues debated was the membership and powers of the proposed body. An earlier compromise on this issue had appeared to resolve the deadlock following many months of difficult negotiation, after the Forum

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World, Canberra, Australian Government Publishing Service, 1979. p117

[75] Joint Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade, Australia's Relations With The South Pacific. p255.

[76] Thomas R. Adam, Western Interests in the Pacific Realm, New York, Random House, 1967. p155. Ramesh Thakur (ed.), The South Pacific: Problems, Issue and Prospects. p15. John C. Dorrance, The United States and the Pacific Islands. pp111-112, 151-152.

meeting at Port Moresby in 1977 agreed in principle to establish a regional fisheries agency.

In June 1978, an agreement was reached whereupon the United States agreed to sign a treaty to establish a regional body to regulate fisheries so long as coastal state jurisdiction of tuna was not affirmed in the document.[77] The United States also agreed to abide by the decisions of the regulatory authority even if tuna was to be subsequently regulated by the latter.[78] However, the consensus did not last and deep-seated suspicions about the United States resurfaced. In September 1978, at the Niue Forum, Ratu Sir Kamisese Mara, Prime Minister of Fiji led the opposition against American membership of the proposed FFA. The main obstacle to agreement was the position of the United States on coastal state jurisdiction over migratory fish stocks. Ramesh Thakur explains:

> "The 1978 South Pacific Forum meeting in Niue was divided on the question of US membership of the proposed regional fisheries agency. Fiji and Papua New Guinea opposed US membership because of fears of US domination, because of the US refusal to recognise coastal state sovereignty over highly migratory species like tuna, and because of a potential conflict of interest if the US as a major distant-water fishing nation was to be involved in controlling South Pacific fishing on behalf of regional nations."[79]

Not all the Pacific Island states were opposed to the inclusion of the United States in the FFA. The Forum appeared to be evenly divided on this issue. And it was later revealed that Gilbert Island, Fiji, Nauru, Papua New Guinea, the Solomon Islands and Tonga were opposed to a FFA that included the US, whereas Australia, the Cook Islands, New Zealand, Niue and Western Samoa were in favour of American

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[77] Richard Herr, 'Cross-cutting Pressures in Contemporary South Pacific Regionalism', in World Review: A Journal Of Contemporary Relevance, Vol. 18, No. 3, August 1979. p18.
[78] Richard Herr, 'Cross-cutting Pressures in Contemporary South Pacific Regionalism'. p18.
[79] Ramesh Thakur (ed.), The South Pacific: Problems, Issue and Prospects. p16.

membership.[80] The bitter debate on this issue was finally resolved when Australia offered the compromise proposal of restricting membership of the FFA to SPF members pending future negotiations.

Australia's preparedness to compromise on the issue of American membership was significant because the proposal for a regional fisheries agency might well have floundered without it. In particular, given Australia's substantial financial support for the FFA, not to mention bilateral aid to the countries opposed to its position (especially Papua New Guinea[81]), it inferred a reluctance to resort to coercion as opposed to persuasion.

Australia's acceptance of, and continued support (in terms of financial and other resources) for, a regional fisheries organisation that excluded the United States reinforced confidence in its good will towards the Pacific Island states. The presence of the United States in the FFA would have made it difficult to exclude other distant water fishing nations and the orientation of the FFA would have been very different as a consequence. Doulman argues that:

> "If it [the United States] had been given membership, then the nature and role of the agency would have been very different. With US participation it is likely that the focus of FFA activity would have been on technical aspects of tuna management at the expense of the economic concerns of South Pacific island countries. Because of the inherent conflict of interest in fisheries management between coastal states and DWFNs, the resource-owning island countries would have been financially disadvantaged by US participation."[82]

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[80] Richard Herr, 'Cross-cutting Pressures in Contemporary South Pacific Regionalism', p19.
[81] Australia provides direct financial support up to a third of the Papua New Guinea budget.
[82] David J. Doulman, 'Fisheries Management in the South Pacific: The Role of the Forum Fisheries Agency', in The South Pacific: Problems, Issue and Prospects, Ramesh Thakur (ed.), London, Macmillan, 1991. p85.

In conceding to a compromise on United States membership in the FFA, Australia demonstrated its commitment to multilateral processes and preserved the viability of the FFA. Australia's actions also reinforced the legitimacy of regional institutions as forums for collective decision-making and the fact that it seeks to persuade, and not coerce, through such regional bodies.

Australia's support for the Pacific Island states was equally significant in the subsequent confrontation between the latter and the United States over the issue of jurisdiction over migratory fish stocks. The issue revolved around the differences between the United States, as a powerful distant water fishing nation, and the Pacific Island states, as coastal states, over the right of access to, and the management of, the highly migratory tuna species within the South Pacific region. In particular, the United States contested the jurisdiction of the Pacific Island states over highly migratory species of tuna, which spent only a part of their life cycle within the waters of the South Pacific region.[83] The issue was brought to a head in the 1970s when,

> "... the influential US tuna lobby was successful in having the US government promulgate a policy that placed the United States at odds with all other coastal states concerning the issue of resource ownership. This policy, given effect by US domestic fisheries legislation commonly known as the Magnusson Act (the Fisheries Conservation and Management Act of 1976), does not recognise coastal state jurisdiction over highly migratory species of fish, unless coastal states cooperate with DWFNs in the management of their tuna resources. This position is rejected by coastal states on sovereignty grounds."[84]

[83] Uentabo Fakaofo Neemia, Cooperation and Conflict: Costs, Benefits and National Interests in Pacific Regional Cooperation, Suva, University of the South Pacific, 1986. pp28-29.
[84] David J. Doulman, 'Fisheries Management in the South Pacific: The Role of the Forum Fisheries Agency', in The South Pacific: Problems, Issue and Prospects, Ramesh Thakur (ed.), London, Macmillan, 1991. p84.

In response, the Pacific Island states organised themselves in a regional initiative to resist the stance adopted by the United States.[85] And in 1986, 16 South Pacific states, including Australia, collectively negotiated an agreement with the United States that resolved most of the outstanding disagreements between them through a licensing arrangement.[86]

Once again, the pivotal role played by Australia within the South Pacific region is highlighted by the manner in which the impasse over access to tuna fisheries in the region by the United States (and other distant water fishing nations) was successfully resolved through negotiation.[87] Australia was credited with a large measure of the negotiations' success because of its role in persuading the United States to adopt a more accommodating stance. Henry Albinski notes that:

> "Secretary of State George Shultz personally took up the treaty's cause. He was influenced by Australian Prime Minister Bob Hawke, who argued that American behavior had been a setback to the United States, to its Western friends in the neighborhood, and indeed to regional well-being."[88]

Australia's role in this issue is noteworthy because it had no significant economic interests to defend with respect to the fisheries issue within the South Pacific. While

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[85] For an account of the tuna issue, see Jon M. Van Dyke & Carolyn Nicol, 'U.S. Tuna Policy: A Reluctant Acceptance of the International Norm', in David J. Doulman, Tuna Issues and Perspectives in the Pacific Islands Region, Honolulu, East-West Center, 1987. pp105-132.

[86] Australia was also referred to as one of the 16 Pacific Island nation, which also included the Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu, Vanuatu, and Western Samoa by the Americans. White House, Principal Deputy Press Secretary, Statement at Waukesha, Wisconsin, 23 October 1986.

[87] See Treaty on Fisheries between the Governments of Certain Pacific Island States and the Government of the United States of America 1987. Article 2.2 states: "The Government of the United States shall, as appropriate, promote the maximization of benefits generated for the Pacific Island parties from the operations of fishing vessels of the United States licensed pursuant to this Treaty, including: (a) the use of canning, transshipment, slipping and repair facilities located in the Pacific Island parties; (b) the purchase of equipment and supplies, including fuel supplies, from suppliers located in the Pacific Island parties; and (c) the employment of nationals of the Pacific Island parties on board licensed fishing vessels of the United States."

[88] Henry S. Albinski, 'South Pacific Trends and U.S. Security Implications: An Introductory Overview', in Henry S. Albinski, Robert C. Kiste, Richard Herr, Ross Babbage, & Denis McLean,

the issue of regulating the management of high migratory species is a concern, Australia's approach towards such issues in its own region has been more inclined towards a Law of the Sea 'Article 64-type' approach. This is reflected in the Convention on the Southern Blue Fin Tuna that Australia reached with Japan and New Zealand, which involves distant water fishing nations in the management of fisheries in contrast to the approach that has been taken by the FFA.[89] However, one of Australia's underlying concerns, during the negotiations between the Pacific Island states and the United States over the tuna issue, was that resentment towards the latter might allow the communist powers, especially the Soviet Union, to gain a stronger foothold within the region. Kiribati had concluded a fishing agreement with the Soviet Union in 1985 and Australia was afraid that the strategy of strategic denial might be further compromised if other Pacific Island states followed suit.[90] Thus, by playing upon similar concerns held by the United States, Australia was able to persuade the United States to accommodate the demands of the Pacific Island states in order to ensure that the policy of 'strategic denial' remained effective.[91] In an interesting twist, Australia's influence with policy makers in the United States not only improved its standing with the Pacific Island states, its improved standing within the South Pacific region enhanced its influence with policy makers in the United States.[92]

The South Pacific: Political, Economic, and Military Trends, Special Report 1989, Washington, Brassey's (US), Inc., 1989. p5.

[89] Article 6 states: "The coastal State and other States whose nationals fish in the region for the highly migratory species listed in Annex I shall co-operate directly or through appropriate international organizations with a view to ensuring conservation and promoting the objective of optimum utilization of such species throughout the region, both within and beyond the exclusive economic zone. In regions for which no appropriate international organization exists, the coastal State and other States whose nationals harvest these species in the region shall co-operate to establish such an organization and participate in its work." Thus, such an approach would include distant water fishing nations in the management of fish stocks, and the Convention for the Conservation of Southern Bluefin Tuna, Done at Canberra, 10 May 1993, clearly adopts such an approach.

[90] The Soviet Union also concluded a fishing arrangement with Vanuatu in 1987, as well as established a diplomatic presence in Papua New Guinea in 1990.

[91] A concern that was probably overstated in hindsight.

[92] Henry S. Albinski, 'South Pacific Trends and U.S. Security Implications: An Introductory Overview'. p6.

Australia's role in helping the Pacific Island states to resolve their dispute with the United States over the tuna issue might have been prompted by self-interest and the policy of strategic denial. Nevertheless, it cannot be denied that the licensing agreement that was eventually reached is regarded as beneficial to the Pacific Island states and provides them with an additional source of valuable revenue. The licensing agreement, colloquially referred to as the 'Tuna Treaty', put in place a multilateral arrangement wherein the right of the United States to fish in the region is recognised by the Pacific Island states in return for a 5 year US$60 million package of fees and assistance.

The 'Tuna Treaty' between the US and the Pacific Island states provided a model for subsequent licensing arrangements, whereby distant water fishing states pay a fee in return for access to fisheries within the exclusive economic zones of the Pacific Island states.[93] Fees are usually determined in a per vessel basis, with the payment being related to the expected value of the catch of the vessel during the period that it is licensed to fish. Revenues received by FFA member-countries from distant water fishing states access fee payments are directed to their respective consolidated revenue funds and used to support public expenditure programmes. Therefore, even though the Pacific Island states do not possess large fishing fleets of their own, they derive considerable profit from their maritime resources, largely through the access fees charged to distant water fishing states, such as the United States, Japan, Taiwan and Korea. In several FFA member-countries revenue generated by 'distant water fishing nation' access fee payments accounts for more than 50 percent of the national

[93] David J. Doulman, 'Fisheries Management in the South Pacific: The Role of the Forum Fisheries Agency'. pp81-82.

government's budget.[94] Licensing fees, after foreign aid, have become one of the most significant sources of revenue for many small island economies in the South Pacific region.[95] The importance of these arrangements with distant water fishing nations is also emphasised by the fact that, in addition to fishing, the latter often establish industries in the South Pacific for the processing and canning of tuna for transshipment and export.

Australia has been criticised for being insensitive to the Pacific Island states.[96] However, Australia's commitment to help its smaller neighbours become more effective appears genuine and its support for South Pacific regional institutions, such as the FFA, has been crucial towards helping the Pacific Island states realise many of their aspirations. While Australia appears committed to its obligations as the *de facto* standard bearer for Western interests in the South Pacific,[97] its actions on the issue of the FFA and the dispute with the United States demonstrates that it is not merely a proxy for its great and powerful friend. Instead, Australia emphasised its role as the main arbiter of how Western interests are best served within its sphere of influence in the South Pacific region when it balanced the interests of the United States in tuna fisheries against the general Western interest in preserving the policy of strategic denial. By successfully persuading the United States to come to terms with the Pacific Island states on the issue of tuna fisheries, Australia also demonstrates that it is an effective middle power and justifies its claims to leadership within the South Pacific region.

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[94] David J. Doulman, 'Fisheries Management in the South Pacific: The Role of the Forum Fisheries Agency'. p82.
[95] John C. Dorrance, The United States and the Pacific Islands. p57.
[96] Alan Burnett and Robin Burnett, The Australian and New Zealand Nexus, Canberra, Australian Institute of International Affairs, 1978. pp273-274.

The South Pacific Nuclear Free Zone

Australia's hegemonic influence in the South Pacific region has been exercised with discretion in order to maintain a fine balance between the aspirations of the Pacific Island states and the need to defend Western interests. The position adopted by Australia on the issue of the nuclear free zone is another instance where it seized a leadership role in regional decision making processes in order to influence outcomes that it believed would reconcile its competing interests.

The advocacy for a nuclear free South Pacific region had been a recurrent issue in regional debates since the early 1970s and many Pacific Island states have demonstrated strong support for the anti-nuclear cause.[98] Twelve years of nuclear tests in the Marshall Islands atolls of Bikini and Eniwetak, followed by eight years (1966-1974) of French nuclear tests in the open atmosphere of the South Pacific, and the subsequent underground testing (till 1996) by the French have heightened sensitivities within the region on this issue.[99]

Notwithstanding the obvious adverse environmental consequences, there is also widespread resentment among Pacific Island states over the fact that nuclear tests within the South Pacific region carry the insinuation that the region is expendable. The sentiment is that the South Pacific region had been used as guinea pig for dangerous experiments and dragged into a global contest between nuclear superpowers in which it wanted no part. Consequently, the Pacific Island states

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[97] Thomas R. Adam, Western Interests in the Pacific Realm, New York, Random House, 1967. p155. Ramesh Thakur (ed.), The South Pacific: Problems, Issue and Prospects. p15. John C. Dorrance, The United States and the Pacific Islands, Westport, Praeger, 1992. pp111-112, 151-152.

[98] Roy Ferguson, 'Environmental Problems', in The South Pacific: Problems, Issue and Prospects, Ramesh Thakur (ed.), London, Macmillan, 1991. p67.

developed a strong antipathy towards the presence and testing of nuclear weapons within their region. There was a widespread desire to exclude all harmful things related to nuclear technology from the region and an end to nuclear testing in the region. The belief is that a nuclear free zone would not only end environmentally harmful nuclear testing in the region but would ensure that the South Pacific region is kept out of any nuclear conflict between the great powers. Many Australians appear to have sympathy for these sentiments and openly supportive of the anti-nuclear cause. Indeed, Australia has been "blamed for the rigid hostility island states have ritually held towards France."[100]

Australian foreign policy on this issue has been more ambivalent. On the one hand, Australia demonstrated its support for South Pacific sensitivities both in terms of domestic and popular protests, as well as at a diplomatic level, against French nuclear testing in the Pacific. The initiative of the Whitlam government (together with New Zealand) to take France to the International Court of Justice for conducting nuclear tests in the South Pacific offended France but has been very well-received by the Pacific Island states.[101] Nevertheless, Australia's objection to nuclear testing within the South Pacific region is tempered by its recognition of the importance of an American military presence, especially one that is nuclear-armed, to its security.[102] The narrow line tread by Australia on this issue is observed by Millar, who notes that:

> "For some years both Australia and New Zealand had been concerned about nuclear testing in the South Pacific. The small island states were virtually unanimous in condemning such testing and in seeking to have the Pacific as a nuclear-free zone. Despite

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[99] Roy Ferguson, 'Environmental Problems'. p67.
[100] Jim Sanday, South Pacific Culture and Politics: Notes on Current Issues, working paper no. 174, Canberra, Strategic and Defence Studies Centre, 1988. p5.
[101] T.B. Millar, Australia in Peace and War, External Relations Since 1788. p340.
[102] T.B. Millar, Australia in Peace and War, External Relations Since 1788. p362.

> some sympathy with the idea, Australia and New Zealand as American allies could not see such a zone being either practical or desirable, and they managed for a time to carry the South Pacific island countries with them."[103]

Thus, Australia had resisted periodic calls from the Pacific Island states for a nuclear free zone until the mid 1980s even as they supported protests against French nuclear testing in the same period.[104]

The vacillation in Australian foreign policy, from the sympathetic agitation of Whitlam, to the silent resistance of Fraser, to the attempt at reconciliation by Hawke, on the issue of a nuclear free zone in the South Pacific region reflected its ambivalence on this issue. In some respects, this highlighted the differences between the cynicism of the structuralist perspectives, with respect to their faith in great power guarantees of security, reflected in the Conservative approach espoused by Fraser and the bias towards multilateral responses reflected in the Labor approach.[105]

The issue of a nuclear free zone illustrated the extent of Australia's ability, as a middle power, to influence developments within the South Pacific region. Australia's refusal to countenance a nuclear free zone in the South Pacific prior to the 1980s corresponded with a significant lack of success in getting any regional arrangement for a nuclear free zone off the ground. In part, this infers the extensive influence that Australia possesses within the South Pacific region on issues affecting its interests. It also reflects the difficulty of establishing an effective regional and institutional response without Australian support. This conjecture is further supported by the fact

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[103] T.B. Millar, Australia in Peace and War, External Relations Since 1788. p354.

[104] This tension between Australia's dual role as a champion of Western interests and Pacific Island interests has always been a key issue. In 1970-1971 even as Australia helped to establish the South Pacific Forum, which excluded the metropolitan powers, it chose to retain the South Pacific Commission in order to keep France and other metropolitan powers engaged in regional multilateral institutions. Personal interview with A/Prof Richard Herr.

that the modification of Australia's foreign policy on this issue in the early 1980s resulted in the relatively quick adoption of a regional treaty for a nuclear free zone in the South Pacific in 1986.

Australia's change of heart on a nuclear free zone in the South Pacific region may be attributed to two main factors. The first is the strong and popular anti-nuclear sentiment during this period, especially within Australia's domestic environmental and peace-movement constituencies. The second is the concern that further resistance to the anti-nuclear sentiment within the South Pacific region, which had been gathering force, might undermine Australia's influence and interests within the region. In particular, the powerful nuclear sentiment in New Zealand, an erstwhile American ally, had not only jeopardised the ANZUS arrangement through the refusal to allow access to United States nuclear vessels, it also threatened to inspire other states in the South Pacific region to follow suit. In jumping on the anti-nuclear bandwagon, Australia sought to lead the discourse in the South Pacific Forum, defuse the tension, and re-direct the cause in its own interests. In this regard, Australia succeeded, albeit with a solution that has not been totally satisfactory to everyone.[106]

Australia was able to relieve the pressure from the anti-nuclear movement in the region and address the issues raised through the medium of the South Pacific Forum. Australia exercised its influence within the South Pacific Forum to persuade most of its members that "a watered down treaty was better than either of two alternatives – a

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[105] See Chapter 3.

[106] Australia's success was, however, not greeted with the enthusiasm it might have expected from its Western Allies. The French blamed Australia for the hostility of the Pacific Island states towards them, and considered the SPNFZ a useless agreement. See Jim Sanday, South Pacific Culture and Politics: Notes on Current Issues. p9. T.B. Millar, Australia in Peace and War, External Relations Since 1788. p340.

treaty that was totally unenforceable, or no treaty at all."[107] Australia argued that it recognised the conflicting interests of Pacific Island states and the metropolitan nuclear powers on this issue, but that:

> "... these pressures could be contained only by early implementation of a nuclear-free zone arrangement that addressed French nuclear testing, as well as the stationing or storing of nuclear weapons and the potential dumping nuclear waste, but protected essential regional security requirements. The latter were perceived as including freedom of high seas navigation, innocent passage through territorial seas, and port access by "nuclear ships"."[108]

Therefore, Australia led the way in the construction of a treaty that reconciled its own objections to French nuclear testing with its desire to ensure that American naval access to the region is not compromised.[109]

The result was the South Pacific Nuclear Free Zone Treaty (or Treaty of Rarotonga 1986) which satisfied a number of Australian objectives. The South Pacific Nuclear Free Zone Treaty states that parties to the treaty were:

> "... not to manufacture or otherwise acquire, possess or have control over any nuclear device by any means anywhere inside or outside the South Pacific Nuclear Free Zone."[110]

In effect, the above is the 'nuclear-free' clause. However, Australia ensured that its own key strategic interests are protected as the Treaty also states that:

> "Each Party in the exercise of its sovereign rights remains free to decide for itself whether to allow visits by foreign ships and aircraft to its ports and airfields, transit of its airspace by foreign aircraft,

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[107] T.B. Millar, Australia in Peace and War, External Relations Since 1788. p362.
[108] John C. Dorrance, The United States and the Pacific Islands. p43.
[109] Steward Firth, 'Strategic and nuclear issues', in Tides of History: The Pacific Islands in the Twentieth Century, K.R. Howe, Robert C. Kiste, & Brij V. Lal (eds.), St Leonard's, Allen & Unwin, 1994. pp311-312.
[110] South Pacific Nuclear Free Zone Treaty, 1986, done at Rarotonga. Article 3(a).

> and navigation by foreign ships in its territorial sea or archipelagic waters..."[111]

Thus, American naval access to South Pacific waters is preserved and Australia's defence arrangements with the United States remain unaffected, even as a symbolic gesture was being made through a treaty to declare the South Pacific region a 'nuclear free' zone.

The Treaty did not result in significant material change at the time. The United States reserved the right to sail nuclear-capable warships within the South Pacific region and the French continued underground nuclear testing.[112] Nevertheless, the Treaty ameliorated regional resentment on the issue and forestalled a stronger response.

The desire to protect Australia's access to the full military capabilities of the United States is primarily motivated by the perception that the then-Soviet Union, China or some other power might someday pose a threat to Australia. However, the promptness with which the then-Soviet and Chinese governments became signatories to the Treaty of Rarotonga suggests that they never had much strategic interest in the region anyway, at least not with regard to nuclear deployment. Nevertheless, Australia's role with regard to the issue of a nuclear free zone within the South Pacific demonstrated its ability to defend its interests by setting the agenda and influencing outcomes of regional decision making processes. Australia's capacity to pursue an idiosyncratic line on the issue of a nuclear free zone in the South Pacific region reflected its capacity to assume a role of significant influence as a middle power. Finally, Australia's attempt to reconcile the interests of Western security arrangements with the aspirations of the independent Pacific Island states suggests

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[111] South Pacific Nuclear Free Zone Treaty. Article 5(2).
[112] France only signed the Treaty in 1996 after it had concluded its programme of nuclear testing.

that, as always, its role as an influential middle power in the South Pacific region is tempered by the tension between self-interest and altruism.

Conclusion

Australia's aspirations for a leadership role within the South Pacific region have always been evident. Australia's efforts to establish itself as a regional hegemon may be demonstrated by the history of its efforts to play a decisive role, first as a colonial power and subsequently through regional multilateral institutional arrangements, in the South Pacific. As a colonial power, Australia signalled its ambitions by seeking to establish and extend a British sphere of influence within the South Pacific region. As a British dominion, Australia served as an administrative centre for many of Great Britain's colonial possessions and exerted influence over the South Pacific region. Australian advocacy for a British sphere of influence in the South Pacific region was also premised on the need to pre-empted the possibility of a threat from Britain's European enemies to a remote dominion like Australia.

The notion of a sphere of influence was revisited when a combination of British indifference and growing Australian assertiveness saw the latter give voice to its ambitions in the post war councils following the First World War. Australia demanded that its great power allies acknowledge the primacy of its interests within the South Pacific region. And in this regard, it has been argued that the ANZAC Pact and the ANZUS Treaty may be viewed as an effort to institutionalise a leading role for Australia in the South Pacific region, as the custodian of Western interests.

The passing of the colonial era saw a change in attitudes towards the region. The decolonisation of the Pacific Island states and the advent of the Cold War introduced 'new' actors and issues that challenged Australia's role as a middle power. The familiar theme of a vulnerable middle power situated in a relatively remote geographic location was now informed by the perception of a potential threat to Australian and Western interests from a Soviet presence in the South Pacific region. A new concern is the apprehension that the small but independent Pacific Island states might easily succumb to the influence of the Soviet Union and thereby constitute a security risk. These fears encouraged Australia to establish strong and comprehensive relationships, bilateral and multilateral, with the independent Pacific Island states in order to support its strategy of strategic denial against the Soviet Union. However, Australia's role within the South Pacific region has been motivated by considerations apart from strategic interests. These included a sense of altruism and the determination to be a good international citizen by lending the resources and support of a wealthy middle power to small developing nations.

To some extent, the two underlying motives guiding Australia's role in the South Pacific, characterised by Idealism in one and Realism in the other, overlap and are complementary. Thus, Australia's interest in being a custodian of Western interests in the South Pacific region is expressed concurrently with its desire to protect the welfare of the native peoples in that region. Similarly, Australia's interest in establishing regional institutions in the South Pacific has been prompted both by the desire to ensure that the Pacific Island states do not succumb to blandishments of rival powers, as well as by the desire to help them overcome their limitations of their size and resources.

Australia's role in the development and achievements of the FFA, as well as in the South Pacific Nuclear Free Zone Treaty highlighted the tension between self-interest and altruism. In both, Australia had to balance its loyalty to its great and powerful friends with its own role as a great and powerful ally to the small but independent Pacific Island states. In its efforts to reconcile the aspirations of the independent Pacific Island states with its own interests, as well as the interests of its Western allies, Australia has demonstrated a reluctance to resort to coercion. Instead, Australia's capacity to persuade and its strong commitment to multilateral processes helped to bring about a successful conclusion to the issues confronted by the FFA. This success served Australia's interests with respect to the policy of strategic denial, as well as reinforced its own influence as a middle power in the South Pacific region. Similarly, Australia's success in setting the agenda, and establishing a multilateral arrangement, for a nuclear free zone within the South Pacific consistent with its own interests demonstrates its effectiveness as a middle power in the South Pacific region. Thus, it is proposed that while structuralist perspectives provide a satisfactory account of Australia's earlier influence as a middle power in the South Pacific region, Australia's influence has since been manifested in a fashion that is more consistent with the expectations of process oriented perspectives.

CHAPTER 5

> "The fundamental question is this. Could the United Nations provide a practical alternative to the Treaty or a more effective framework to regulate further activities, including environmental protection, in Antarctica? On the basis of my own experience – and even as a firm supporter of the multilateral system – I would in this case, have to answer 'No'. We should continue to deal with all issues relating to Antarctica through the Antarctic Treaty System. My personal experience at the United Nations and of Antarctica have demonstrated to me that one system – the United Nations system – works less effectively than I had hoped, probably because of its sheer size, while the other system – the Antarctic Treaty System – works more effectively than I had expected. This experience has led me to the conclusion that institutionalised United Nations involvement in Antarctica, however well intentioned, would prove less effective in the management of that continent than the Antarctic Treaty. This has been the case until now; and I believe that it will be the case in the future."[1] – Richard Woolcott, Australia's Ambassador to the United Nations (1982-1988)

Introduction

The previous chapters suggest that a middle power is a state that is able to act in a manner akin to that of a great power within regional subsets of the state system. The previous chapter also argued that a middle power, such as Australia, could be distinguished by its affinity for multilateral institutional arrangements. In this chapter, Australia's role in the Antarctic and Southern Ocean region is examined.[2] Whereas Australia has been able to manifest all the classical traits of a middle power

[1] Richard Woolcott, 'Changes And Changes', in R.A. Herr, H.R. Hall, & M.G. Haward (eds.), Antarctica's Future: Continuity or Change? Tasmania, Australian Institute of International Affairs, 1990. p28.

in the South Pacific region, some variations to these traditional expectations of middle power behaviour are evident in Australia's role within the Antarctic region.

Australia's role in the Antarctic region highlights some of the challenges that would confront a middle power seeking influence in a region where states equal or superior to itself in power have taken an active interest. The geopolitical factors affecting Australia's role in the Antarctic region would appear to preclude the possibility of it assuming the mantle of a regional great power there. Australia's ability to assume the posture of a great power in the Antarctic region is circumscribed by the presence of states that are great powers and other powers with resources equal to, or superior to its own. Therefore, the expectations of those who hold structuralist perspectives of middle powers would be inclined towards a more modest role for Australia in the Antarctic region. However, it is argued that Australia has consistently demonstrated its ambition to exercise influence over the Antarctic region and that it has been able to do so through the Antarctic Treaty System. Thus, where structuralist perspectives failed, process oriented perspectives have been able to account for Australia's capacity to exercise significant influence over developments in the Antarctic region and demonstrate the manner by which a middle power can successfully wield decisive influence through multilateral institutional arrangements.

In examining Australia's role in Antarctica, Davis and Herr identified 3 separate eras of Australian involvement in Antarctica:

> "a. idiosyncratic individualism in the 'heroic age' of Antarctic exploration 1890-1945:
> b. commitment to the Antarctic Treaty System post 1959, coupled with station establishment and hydra-headed science programs 1945-1990:

[2] All subsequent references to the Antarctic and Southern Ocean region shall simply be described as the Antarctic region for the sake of brevity.

> c. prospective maturity management of the Antarctic environment in the post-CRAMRA Madrid Protocol era. 1990 onwards."[3]

For the purposes of this thesis, this schema may be slightly adjusted to reflect 3 distinct themes affecting Australian influence in the Antarctic region; unilateral influence, regional multilateralism and the challenge of global arrangements to regionalism. These three themes correspond roughly to 3 phases, outlined above, of Australia's involvement with the Antarctic region.[4] It is proposed that these themes reflect key issues within the chronological periods with which they are respectively identified in this chapter although their relevance would not necessary be confined to these periods. For example, it is argued that Australia continues to reinforce its sovereign claims over the Australian Antarctic Territory even though it remains committed to the Antarctic Treaty System. This behaviour might be seen as 'idiosyncratic individualism' because the persistence of 'unilateral' sovereign claims could be regarded as being incompatible with the theme of multilateral institutional authority represented by the Antarctic Treaty System.

The classification of the issues affecting Australia's role as a middle power in the Antarctic region within the categories of unilateral influence, regional multilateralism and the challenge of global arrangements to regionalism provides a useful framework for discussion. Examining Australia's unilateral role in the Antarctic region draws attention to the limitations of structuralist perspectives in guiding middle powers towards an effective role in a geographic region where their dominance is not assured by the good fortune of being more powerful than other

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[3] Bruce W. Davis and Richard A. Herr, ATS Decision-Making and Changes: The Role Of Domestic Politics In Australia, International Antarctic Regime Project publication series. No. 3. Fridtjof Nansen Institute, 1992, p2.

states in the same locale. In contrast, Australia's leadership role and influence within the Antarctic Treaty System underscores the opportunities open to resourceful middle powers and the utility of the insights offered by process oriented perspectives (at least within the Antarctic region). The schema adopted also contrasts the preference that a middle power like Australia has exhibited for regional arrangements where it may assume a decisive role on regional issues, with its antipathy towards global multilateral arrangements where its influence is less strongly entrenched and its interests less well defended.

The first phase examined explores Australia's attempts to assume influence in Antarctica as a part of the British Empire and subsequently as an independent middle power. Australia's modest success in claiming recognition for its sovereign claims over the Australian Antarctic Territory demonstrates some of the limitations that confront middle powers seeking to establish regional influence by relying solely on traditional notions of power and influence. The second phase saw Australia commit itself to the regional multilateral institutional arrangements represented by the Antarctic Treaty System. It is argued that Australia's ambition for influence within the Antarctic region has been satisfied by these regional arrangements and that its capacity to influence regional developments is founded upon its ability to exploit the opportunities furnished by the Antarctic Treaty System. In particular, the extent and efficacy of Australian influence is demonstrated in its role as one of the consultative parties in the Antarctic Treaty and the part that it had played in the Madrid Protocol. The third phase saw Australia reaffirm its commitment to regional arrangements and resist demands for a stronger role for global multilateral institutional arrangements within the Antarctic region. Australia successfully assumed a leadership role, over

[4] Instead of a post CRAMRA, the period leading up to CRAMRA is taken as a significant phase where commitment to the established regional multilateral arrangements is reaffirmed and the attempt

other more powerful states in the Antarctic region, to defend the Antarctic Treaty System against the challenge of Third World nations calling for broader and globally-based multilateral institutional arrangements. Australia enjoyed a position of entrenched influence in the regional arrangements represented by the Antarctic Treaty System. Therefore, it is argued that, notwithstanding other possible consequences, the introduction of a global regulatory regime in place of or in addition to the regional arrangements for the Antarctic region would have likely resulted in the erosion of Australian influence and a diminution of its role there.

In short, this chapter contends that Australia has demonstrated both the ambition and capacity for a role of influence within the Antarctic region. While its initial efforts to assume a leadership role over the Antarctic region had been less successful, it is argued that Australia eventually achieved a position for leadership and influence within the Antarctic region through the Antarctic Treaty System. Australia demonstrated its capabilities in exercising both leadership and influence when it rejected the proposition for a Minerals Convention and set the agenda for environmental protection in the Antarctic region through the Madrid Protocol to the Antarctic Treaty. Australia seized a leadership role again when it argued in favour of regional multilateral arrangements to manage the affairs of the Antarctic region. And demonstrated its ability to defend its own interests and its dominant position within the region when it successfully led the resistance to the proposed introduction of global regulatory arrangements for the Antarctic region.

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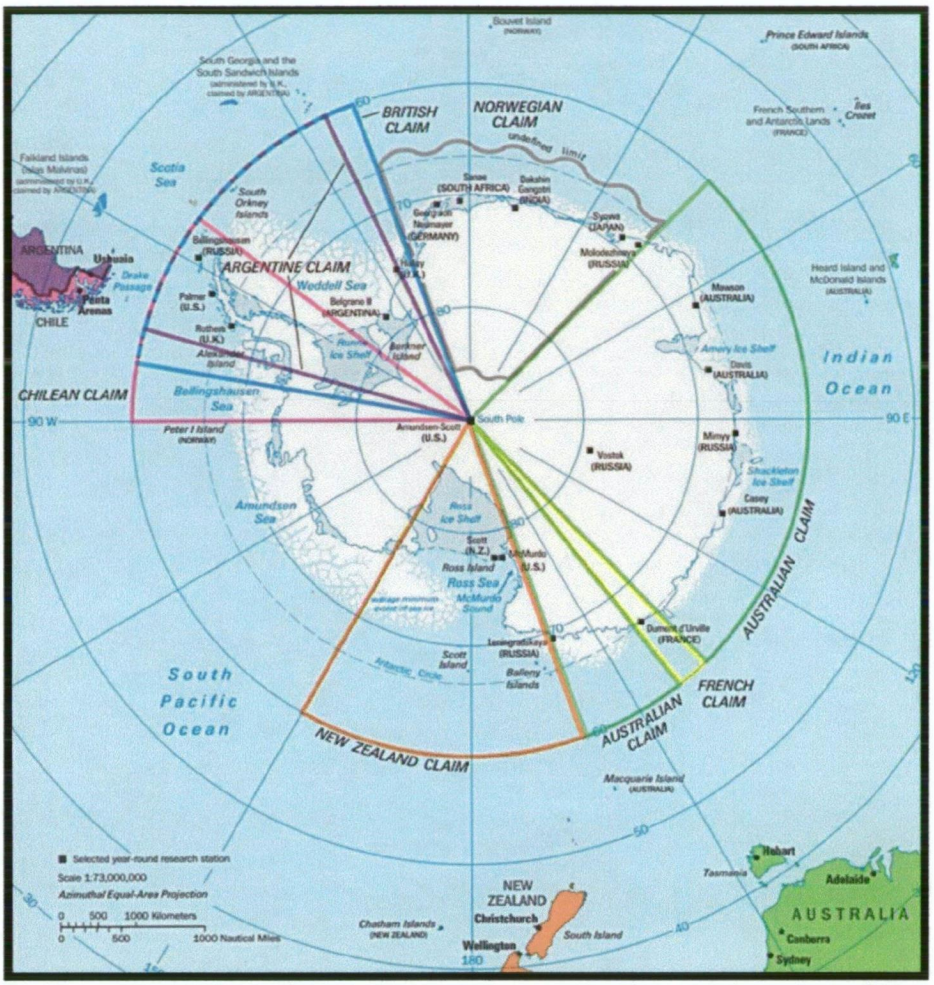
to replace the latter with broader global arrangements rejected.

The Antarctic and Southern Ocean Region



Source: Perry-Castañeda Library Map Collection, University of Texas at Austin, http://www.lib.utexas.edu/Libs/PCL/Map_collection/Map_collection.html

Antarctica is often called the 'white continent'. The Antarctic region has been described as "a relatively inhospitable, uninhabited and 'out of the way' [region] … isolated from the mainstream of international affairs."[5] It is a place "whose peripheral location, geographic isolation, tardy discovery, unknown nature and pristine features"[6] has reinforced its image as 'a pole apart' from the rest of the world. Antarctica is characterised by geographic and climatic extremes. Steady winds of over 100 km/hour sweep a land that is almost totally covered in ice more

[5] Peter J. Beck, Who Owns Antarctica? Governing and Managing the Last Continent, in Boundary and Territory Briefing, Volume 1 Number 1, Durham, IBRU, 1994. p1.
[6] Peter J. Beck, Who Owns Antarctica? Governing and Managing the Last Continent. p1

than a mile thick. There is almost no rainfall and temperatures as low as -89.6°C have been recorded. Antarctica has the highest elevation of all the continents. It has the world's largest and driest desert. There are no land vertebrates and it is the sole continent without trees.[7]

It is generally agreed that the Antarctic region includes the continent of Antarctica and the waters south of the Southern Convergence.[8] The Antarctic region is also defined by the Antarctic Treaty, which stipulates a region south of latitude 60 degrees south, and by the Convention for the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources, which adopts the boundary established by the Southern Convergence.[9]

The most prominent feature about the Antarctic region is the fact that Antarctica is largely uninhabited and there are no people indigenous to the continent. The Antarctic region has been touted as a place that represents the last great wilderness on earth. Apart from some small settlements of scientists, adventurers and tourists, Antarctica has remained free from the influence of human civilisation. While there are no human inhabitants indigenous to Antarctica, seven states, Argentina, Australia, Chile, France, New Zealand, Norway, and the United Kingdom, have laid claim to sovereignty over parts of Antarctica and the Southern Oceans. Several other states, including the United States and Russia, have not claimed sovereignty over territory in Antarctica but have reserved the right to do so. All sovereignty claims in Antarctica are disputed and the primary source of effective regulatory authority

[7] F.M. Auburn, Antarctic Law and Politics, London, C. Hurst & Company, 1982. p1 & 2.
[8] The distinctive currents caused when the waters of the Southern Ocean meet the Pacific, the Indian, and the South Atlantic Ocean mark the boundary of the Southern Convergence.
[9] Article 6 of the Antarctic Treaty, 1959. Article 1 of the Convention on the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources, 1980.

within the Antarctic region is the network of multilateral institutional arrangements known as the Antarctic Treaty System.

The Antarctic region, like the Arctic region, borders states and continents that are usually considered to be at the opposite ends of the earth. Therefore, even though states like Australia, Chile, India and South Africa are located on different continents and geographically distant from one another, they may all claim to share a region in Antarctica and the Southern Ocean. Northern Hemisphere states like the United Kingdom, Belgium, Poland and France have also claimed a role in the Antarctic region, either as claimants to sovereignty over territory in Antarctica or as signatories to the various multilateral institutional arrangements that exercise effective jurisdiction over the region or both.

The above factors are some of the special characteristics unique to the Antarctic region and which render the region unlike any other. Therefore, it is in the context of these considerations that Australia's role, as an effective middle power, in the Antarctic region should be appreciated.

Australian Antarctic Interests and Strategy In the Pre-Antarctic Treaty Era

This section examines the first phase of Australia's involvement in the Antarctic region and reviews its early interests in the region, as well as the methods that it has employed to defend those interests. Australia's ambitions for significant influence in the Antarctic region in the pre-Antarctic Treaty era were guided by considerations not unlike those that shaped its early involvement in the South Pacific region. While

Australia's desire to protect commercial interests, related to whaling and sealing, was a significant factor, it was the perception of a need to defend its strategic interests and security that was the primary motivation for its initial efforts to claim sovereignty and influence over the Antarctic region. As a region that lay contiguous to Australia's southern (and undisputed) maritime boundaries, the Antarctic region, as with the South Pacific region discussed earlier, is regarded as an area of key strategic interest where unfriendly powers could potentially maintain bases that would threaten Australia's security. These concerns prompted Australia to seek jurisdiction over the Antarctic region, initially by supporting the extension of the British Empire over the Antarctic continent and subsequently by laying claim to sovereignty over the Australian Antarctic Territory.

Australia's early initiatives for influence in the Antarctic region corresponded with the expectations of structuralist perspectives in terms of how middle powers would seek to extend their influence within the state system. Australia had sought to exploit its relationship with Great Britain by persuading it to defend their mutual interests within the Antarctic region through annexation. Australia's claims to sovereignty over the Australian Antarctic Territory also raised issues that touch upon Realist concerns within structuralist perspectives. Such claims to sovereignty carry with them questions about Australia's capacity to enforce the rights, responsibilities and obligations of a sovereign, as well as its ability to maintain a monopoly over jurisdictional authority within the area it has claimed against states that do not recognised the legitimacy of its claims. Where consent to, or recognition of, sovereign claims are absent, Realist perspectives with regard to the power required to uphold such claims in the face of dispute would apply.

Australia's claims to sovereignty over the Australian Antarctic Territory have made little impression on other states and any material impact resulting from such claims has (thus far) only affected its domestic constituents. Moreover, Australia's accession to the Antarctic Treaty has, arguably, rendered its claims irrelevant insofar as other states are concerned.[10] Therefore, even though there are a few states which recognise Australia's claims, its claims to sovereignty over the Australian Antarctic Territory have been largely ineffectual in providing a source of legitimate authority that would enable it to regulate activity and defend its interests within the Antarctic region. Nevertheless, notwithstanding the points raised above, it is conceded that Australia's persistence in repeating its sovereign claims to the Australian Antarctic Territory accords with its perception that its claims are legitimate and that the periodic reiteration of its claims is necessary to the effective defence of its national interests.

Early Australian Interests And Claims In The Antarctic Region

Early Australian interests in the Antarctic region were largely regarded as being synonymous with British interests. Certainly, Australia's claims to territory on Antarctica are inherited from the days when it was part of the British Empire. These claims are based on acts of discovery and exploration of the Antarctic region by British and Australian navigators and adventurers, including Captain Cook and Mawson. British explorers and adventurers had been among the first to actively explore Antarctica but (arguably) their intent might have been to claim glory rather than a continent. However, a growing range of commercial and security interests in

[10] The argument against this is that Australia's claims are irrelevant only insofar as the other signatories are concerned, but would have effect on those states who are not party to the Antarctic

the Antarctic region soon led to the view, especially in Australia, of an urgent need for formal claims of sovereignty to be extended over territory in Antarctica in order to protect those interests more effectively.

The increase in commercial interests, especially with respect to whaling and sealing, dictated much of the early policy adopted towards the Antarctic region. Indeed, it has been argued that Australia and Britain annexed the Antarctic continent in order to protect their significant commercial interests in the Antarctic region by claiming jurisdiction over the latter before their commercial rivals could do likewise.[11] Hall notes that:

> "The initial annexation of Antarctica began, in the main, as a response to problems, questions and opportunities in what Fieldhouse calls 'the periphery'. For example, the concern of the Governor of the Falkland Islands about the operations of the Compania Argentine de Pesca S.A. on South Georgia (communicated to the British Foreign Office, Colonial Office and Admiralty), coupled with the Norwegian inquiry about the sovereignty of territories located in what is known as Western Antarctica, led to the issuing of ordinance to regulate the whole fishery of the colony of the Falkland Islands in 1906 and subsequent Letters Patent of 1908, which provided Britain with a legal foundation to control the expanding whaling industry."[12]

In 1908 and 1917, the British government issued Letters Patent declaring British sovereignty over Graham Land and in so doing, they made the first formal claim to lands in Antarctica.[13] Australia appears to have fully supported this decision, not only because it regarded itself as an integral part of the British Empire but also because it too possessed substantial commercial interests in the Antarctic region at

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Treaty, or the other Treaties that require signatories to recognise article 4 of the Antarctic Treaty. Personal interview with A/Professor Richard Herr.

[11] H. Robert Hall, International Regime Formation And Leadership: The Origins of the Antarctic Treaty, doctoral thesis submitted to the University of Tasmania, 1994. pp48-49.

[12] H. Robert Hall, International Regime Formation And Leadership: The Origins of the Antarctic Treaty. pp48-49.

[13] Peter Beck, The International Politics Of Antarctica, London, Croom Helm, 1986. p113.

the time. Hobart and Sydney were homes to important whaling and sealing industries and the extension of British imperial influence over the Antarctic region would have been regarded as reinforcement of the security of its dominion's commercial interests in that region.[14]

While its commercial interests were significant, Australia's perception of its strategic interests and the importance of assuming greater control and influence over developments within the Antarctic region has arguably been a more compelling factor driving its support for British annexation of the region. Hall notes that:

> "The region's proximity to Australia, New Zealand, South Africa and the Falkland Islands also raised fears in the years immediately after World War I that during any future war, enemy submarines and aircraft might use Antarctica as a base for raiding operations against these Southern parts of the British Empire. Accordingly, Antarctica came to be regarded as a significant part of British imperial security ... [and consequently important to Australia as well.]"[15]

While Australian foreign policy was in its infancy, it was characterised by strong suspicions about the intentions of any non-British power that established or sought to establish a presence in the vicinity of the Australian continent and it often reacted to these powers in a fashion that bordered on paranoia. Thus, Australia's early attitude towards non-British powers in the Antarctic region is reminiscent of the attitude that it displayed towards similar potential rivals in the South Pacific region (described in the previous chapter), where the mere presence of such powers was regarded as a possible security threat. Hall observes that:

> "Following the French claim to Adelie Land in 1924, the Australian government was stirred into action and extended to Antarctica a doctrine of its own – a doctrine also employed in

[14] A. G. Bennett, Whaling in the Antarctic, Edinburgh, W. Blackwood & sons ltd., 1931.
[15] H. Robert Hall, International Regime Formation And Leadership: The Origins of the Antarctic Treaty. p28.

> regard to the Pacific Islands south of the equator 'that any land within a conveniently undefined distance from Australia should be in British possession to insure Australia's insulation from the attentions of a hostile power'. "[16]

Therefore, Australia adopted a strategy of defensive and pre-emptive exclusion of all potential rivals, save Great Britain, her dominions and allies, in its foreign policy towards the Antarctic region prior to the signing of the Antarctic Treaty. During this period, Australia consistently advocated opposition to the presence of any power within the Antarctic region that might be considered a potential threat to British interests and Australian security. The determination of Australia in this regard was manifested in the initial attitudes that it adopted towards Japanese and Soviet presence in the Antarctic region.

Australia was strongly opposed to the presence of Japanese whaling fleets in the Antarctic region after the Second World War. In a series of communiqués between Canberra and Washington in 1947, Australia expressed concerns about the possibility of Japanese vessels being used for spying or for other purposes that may be inimical to Australian interests.[17] In one such communiqué, Makin, the Australian representative to the Far Eastern Commission states:

> "We consider that the presence of Japanese in Australian or Antarctic waters constitutes a threat to the security and welfare of Australia. Factory ships are capable of conversion into tankers and submarine refuelling vessels, and chasers can be converted into naval patrol craft."[18]

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[16] H. Robert Hall, 'International Regime Formation And Leadership: The Origins of the Antarctic Treaty'. p35. See also C. Hartley Grattan, The Southwest Pacific since 1900: A Modern History – Australia, New Zealand, The Islands, Antarctica, The University of Michigan Press, Ann Arbor, 1963. pp614-615.

[17] See Documents on Australian Foreign Policy 1937-49, Volume XII: 1947, W.J. Hudson & Wendy Way (eds.), Canberra, Australian Government Publishing Service, 1995. pp653-661.

[18] 'Statement by Makin to the Far Eastern Commission', reproduced in Documents on Australian Foreign Policy 1937-49, Volume XII: 1947, W.J. Hudson & Wendy Way (eds.). p655.

Although World War II was over, Australia remained suspicious about the presence of the Japanese within the Antarctic region during this period. However, notwithstanding their success with a similar strategy in the South Pacific region,[19] Australian (and New Zealand) protests against American 'authorisation'[20] for Japanese whaling in the Antarctic region were largely unheeded.[21] Australia's great and powerful friend, the United States, was at the time more concerned about ensuring what it considered to be a successful outcome at the Japanese Peace Conference and it was not inclined to acquiesce to Australian wishes in this instance.[22] Australia's protests against Japanese whaling in the Antarctic region highlighted some of the security concerns that influenced its determination to exercise control over its geographic region. However, the futility of the protests highlighted the limitations of pursuing strategies that are contingent upon the concurrence of great power patrons.

Australia's apprehensions about possible security threats, which may emerge from the Antarctic region, were reawakened with the Cold War. And security concerns similar to those expressed about the presence of the Japanese in Antarctic waters were raised again with the growth of a Soviet presence in the Antarctic region. According to Hall:

> "... in Australia at this time, there was much speculation about the possible military value of Soviet bases in Antarctica. Echoing concerns expressed after World War I, newspaper editorials again

[19] See the previous chapter where the success of the strategy of strategic denial in the South Pacific contrasts sharply with Australia's inability to 'deny' the Antarctic region to powers that were perceived as potential adversaries.

[20] The United States was at the time responsible for the postwar administration of Japan through General MacArthur and was preoccupied with ensuring a 'successful' outcome at the Japanese Peace Conference. See 'Statement by Makin to the Far Eastern Commission'. pp655-658.

[21] Similar protests based on ecological arguments were much more successful in later years, reaffirming the view that for middle powers, the pursuit of 'universal' causes, especially where they coincided with national interests, was a more effective approach to foreign policy. See Chapter 2.

[22] See cablegram from Attlee to Chifley, reproduced in Documents on Australian Foreign Policy 1937-49, Volume XII: 1947, W.J. Hudson & Wendy Way (eds.). pp661-662.

> prophesized that the Antarctic 'could become the strategic centre from which air and naval fleets could threaten vital sea lanes around the far corners of Africa, South America and Australia'."[23]

Australia's traditional sense of vulnerability as a small British dominion, which is geographically distant from those it considered its allies, as well as the perception of threats from hostile great powers, contributed to the fear and insecurity that became a constant feature of Australia's early outlook on international relations. [24]

Australian foreign policy, including the policies it adopted towards the Antarctic region, has been driven by its need to address the sense of vulnerability described above. [25] In his thesis, Hall argues that:

> "... the establishment of the Australian Antarctic Territory can be largely explained in terms of ... strategic and security considerations, [which] were clearly important with Antarctica being perceived by Australia as a proximate geographical area from which foreign powers should be excluded by preemptive annexations."[26]

Nationalistic pride, as well as a sense of ownership in the Antarctic continent resulting from discovery and long association, can be cited as reasons for Australia's sovereign claims over the Australian Antarctic Territory. However, it is also clear that the claims to the Australian Antarctic Territory, at least initially, have been strongly motivated by the desire to reinforce the security of the Australian continent by establishing Australian jurisdiction and influence over an adjacent and geographically proximate region. To allay its fears of a threat from potentially hostile foreign power, regardless of whether they are French, German, Japanese or then-

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[23] H. Robert Hall, International Regime Formation And Leadership: The Origins of the Antarctic Treaty. p55.
[24] Alan Renouf, The Frightened Country, Macmillan, London, 1979.
[25] Alan Renouf, The Frightened Country.
[26] H. Robert Hall, International Regime Formation And Leadership: The Origins of the Antarctic Treaty. p55.

Soviet, in its vicinity of its region, Australia had strongly supported the British exploration and annexation of Antarctica. In addition, Australia also launched its own programme for exploration and annexation.

The Basis of Australia's Legal Jurisdiction In The Australian Antarctic Territory

Australia has asserted sovereignty over approximately 42% of the Antarctic continent in an area known as the Australian Antarctic Territory.[27] The Australian Antarctic Territory is defined as the sector between 45 degrees east to 160 degrees east south of 60 degrees south (excluding Adelie Land, which is clamed by the French). The Australian Antarctic Territory covers a vast area that spans about 2.4 million square miles.

Australia's claims to the Australian Antarctic Territory originated with the British and are based on its continuous occupation, administration and control of the area claimed. Auburn records that:

> "In 1922 the [British] Colonial Office held:
>
> The British claim to [the Ross Dependency] rests on discovery ... the territories being at the time of discovery, and now, wholly uninhabited and never having been at any time inhabited except for a few months by scientific expeditions. [D.P. O'Connell and A. Riordan (eds.), Opinions on Imperial Constitutional Law (1971), 311.]
> At the Imperial Conference of 1926, British title by virtue of discovery was asserted over the whole of what now constitutes the Australian Antarctic Territory."[28]

[27] Bruce W. Davis & Richard A. Herr, 'ATS Decision-Making and Changes: The Role Of Domestic Politics In Australia'. p1.
[28] F.M. Auburn, Antarctic Law and Politics. p7.

Although the task was obviously daunting, Australia's initial policy preference for the Antarctic region supported the annexation of the entire continent or at least as much of it as was feasible.[29] In 1930, R.G. Casey, then the Australian Liaison Officer to the British Cabinet office in London, reminded J.H. Scullin, who was then Australian Prime Minister, that:

> "As to the Antarctic, you will recollect that at the Imperial Conference in 1926, it was decided that the aim should be the gradual establishment of British control over the whole (or as much as possible) of the Antarctic continent, apart from the comparatively minor areas to which a good foreign title [Norway's] was held to already exist."[30]

The Australian government clearly exerted itself in efforts to reinforce British and Australian claims to territory in Antarctica and to make its own claims over the Australian Antarctic Territory explicit. Australia made a determined effort to reinforce its claims on the Enderby Land-Ross Sea area through initiatives like the Discovery Expedition.[31] Sir Douglas Mawson, the great Australian explorer, received specific instructions from the Australian Prime Minister, to lay claim or reinforce claims to the territory during his exploration of Antarctica.[32] Mawson was asked to perform legal rituals including the intonation of formal claims and the planting of the flag to solemnise the claims of the British Empire.[33] When exploration and commerce were eventually replaced by science as the primary activity in Antarctica, Australia established a permanent presence on Antarctica through its research bases, which served as visible reminders of its claims and stake in the Australian Antarctic

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[29] Keith Suter, Antarctica, Private Property or Public Heritage, London, Pluto Press, 1991. p87.
[30] Cited in Keith Suter, Antarctica, Private Property or Public Heritage. pp87-88.
[31] Keith Suter, Antarctica, Private Property or Public Heritage. p88.
[32] F.M. Auburn, Antarctic Law and Politics. p10
[33] F.M. Auburn, Antarctic Law and Politics. p10. It should be noted that for a time, Australian claims were often made in the name of the British Empire. It is debatable when independent claims by Australia were first made, as the actual expression of Australian sovereignty is still a matter of debate among constitutional lawyers. Some argue that sovereignty began with the Statue of Westminster 1931, though it was not till a couple of years later that Australia accepted that fact. Certainly Menzize regarded Australia as an integral part of the British Empire as late as the 1950s.

Territory.[34] These efforts represented a consistent and continuous effort to demonstrate that Australia has an active interest in the Antarctic region and thereby entitled to claim influence, if not sovereignty, within the region.

Australia assumed direct responsibility for the Australian Antarctic Territory following the devolution of power from Westminster to the British Dominions in 1931.

> "[O]n February 7, 1933, a British Order-in-Council established the Australian Antarctic Territory, and this was followed in June of that year by the Australian Antarctic Territory Acceptance Act under Section 122 of the Australian Constitution. Thus, after more than a decade of prompting by interested individuals within the Australian Community, and protracted diplomatic discussions between Australia and Britain, approximately three-seventh of Antarctica was annexed under Australian control."[35]

In law, three Acts of the Australian Parliament represent the foundations of Australia's sovereign claim over the Australian Antarctic Territory. They are the Australian Antarctic Territory Acceptance Act 1933, the Australian Antarctic Territory Act 1954 and the Antarctic Treaty Act 1960.[36]

The scope of Australia's legal jurisdiction over its Antarctic Territories has also been clearly defined by the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Legal and Constitutional Affairs. In a report clarifying the judicial status of the Australian Antarctic Territory, the Committee states that:

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[34] On average, about 80 people are recruited to winter at the research bases, with the number increased to more than threefold during the summer season. See http://www.antdiv.gov.au/

[35] H. Robert Hall, 'International Regime Formation And Leadership: The Origins of the Antarctic Treaty'. p37.

[36] House of Representatives Standing Committee on Legal and Constitutional Affairs, Australian Law In Antarctica, The Report of the second phase of an inquiry into the legal regimes of Australia's external Territories and the Jervis Bay Territory, Canberra, Australian Government Publishing Service, November 1992. p16.

> "The legal regime of the Australian Antarctic Territory comprises a complex mix of Commonwealth legislation, ordinances specific to the Territory, applicable laws of the Australian Capital Territory and the Jervis Bay Territory, and obligations arising from the Antarctic Treaty. The main expression given by the Commonwealth to the legal regime for Territory can be found in the Australian Antarctic Territory Act 1954 which provides for the following legislation to apply
>
> - laws, other than criminal laws, in force in the Australian Capital Territory so far as they are applicable and not inconsistent with any ordinance made under the Australian Antarctic Territory Act (sub-section 6(1))
> - criminal laws in force in the Jervis Bay Territory so far as they are applicable and not inconsistent with any ordinance made under the Australian Antarctic Territory Act (sub-section 6 (2))
> - laws expressly applying to the Territory, for example the Antarctic Treaty (Environmental Protection) Act 1980, and Acts expressed to extend to the Territory (Section 8); and
> - ordinances made by the Governor-General under section 11 of the Australian Antarctic Territory Act."[37]

However, the effect of Australian legislation within the Australian Antarctic Territory is limited. It has been argued (in the preceding section) that Australia's declaration of sovereignty over the Australian Antarctic Territory was initially made because it could defend its commercial and other interests more effectively if it could exercise legal jurisdiction over the Antarctic region or parts thereof. However, the Antarctic Treaty of 1959, with its 'article 4 clause' suspending the effects of sovereignty, has rendered claims of sovereignty as a means of enforcing jurisdiction and defending other interests (apart from the claim itself) largely irrelevant.[38]

With the signing of the Antarctic Treaty, Australia could no longer regard its sovereign claims as a means to the end of securing commercial or strategic objectives in the Antarctic region. Nevertheless, national pride has its own momentum and the preservation of Australian sovereignty over the Australian Antarctic Territory has

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[37] House of Representatives Standing Committee on Legal and Constitutional Affairs, Australian Law In Antarctica. p3.

become a matter of national interest in its own right. Therefore, Australia continues to make periodic symbolic gestures to reinforce its claims to sovereignty over the Australian Antarctic Territory even though such gestures appear to have domestic significance only and negligible impact with respect to other nations.

One of the primary issues confronting Australia is the fact that most states do not recognise its claims over the Australian Antarctic Territory. And as a middle power, Australia lacks the ability to unilaterally enforce jurisdiction over a claim that is not recognised. Australia, Great Britain and New Zealand recognise each other's Antarctic claims because their respective claims are all derived from a common British imperial policy.[39] Australia also secured the recognition of its claims from France and Norway in return for recognising their claims in Antarctica.[40] In addition, Australia's claims over Heard Island, McDonald and Macquarie Islands, usually referred to as sub-Antarctic territories or islands, are universally recognised and undisputed.[41] Unfortunately, for Australia, its claims over the Australian Antarctic Territory are not recognised by a vast majority of states. In fact, 11 of the 18 consultative parties to the Antarctic Treaty do not recognise the claims of the 7 claimant states.[42] And perhaps most significant of all, the only remaining superpower and Australia's ally, the United States does not recognise the Australia's claims, or those of any other country, to territory in Antarctica. Therefore, in view of the fact that Australia's claims are almost universally disputed, these claims would remain (arguably) somewhat meaningless, unless it is able to demonstrate its capacity to

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[38] Why and how the Antarctic Treaty provided an alternate means of protecting national interests is explored in greater detail later.
[39] Peter Beck, The International Politics Of Antarctica. p123.
[40] Peter Beck, The International Politics Of Antarctica. p123.
[41] Christopher C. Joyner, 'The Exclusive Economic Zone and Antarctica: The Dilemmas of Non-Sovereign Jurisdiction', in Ocean Development and International Law, Volume 19, 1988. p476.
[42] Sudhir K. Chopra, 'Antarctica As A Commons Regime: A Conceptual Framework For Cooperation And Coexistence', in The Antarctic Legal Regime, Christopher Joyner & Sudhir K. Chopra (eds.), Dordrecht, M. Nijhoff, 1988. p164.

assert *de facto* sovereignty over the area claimed. This would include the capacity to enforce compliance with Australian laws and authority by everyone, including states that disputes its sovereign jurisdiction within the Australian Antarctic Territory.

Australia's inability or reluctance, as a middle power, to compel dissenting states to recognise its claims to sovereignty and jurisdiction within the Australian Antarctic Territory is clear.[43] In 1979, Australia proclaimed a 200 nm fishing zone, an area which would coincide with its claim of an 200 nm Exclusive Economic Zone over the adjacent waters to all its lands and territories in 1994.[44] However, soon after the promulgation of the Australian Fishing Zone, Australia published a government gazette notice that exempted foreign vessels in waters within the Antarctic region from the jurisdiction of its domestic fisheries legislation.[45] Presumably, this course of action by Australia is intended to avoid a confrontation with states that dispute its sovereignty over the Australian Antarctic Territories and therefore its right to enforce Australian law in Antarctic waters.

The House of Representative Standing Committee on Legal and Constitutional Affairs has criticised the above policy and recommended that Australian laws (and consequently Australian sovereignty) be exercised in respect of its claims in Antarctic region.[46] However, Australia would certainly be confronted by enormous

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[43] It is noteworthy to contrast the limitations of Australia, a middle power, with the United States, a great power, which was able to unilaterally declare sovereignty over its continental shelf, and to defend those claims in spite of verbose opposition.

[44] Donald R. Rothwell, 'A Maritime Analysis of Conflicting International Law Regimes in Antarctica and the Southern Ocean', in The Australian Year Book of International Law 1994, Volume 15, Centre for International and Public Law, The Australian National University, 1994. pp164-165.

[45] Donald R. Rothwell, 'A Maritime Analysis of Conflicting International Law Regimes in Antarctica and the Southern Ocean'. p164.

[46] House of Representatives Standing Committee on Legal and Constitutional Affairs, Australian Law In Antarctica. p17. Any conflict with the provisions of the Antarctic Treaty would be side-stepped by exempting from any move to enforce Australian law and sovereignty within the Australian Antarctic Territory, any parties to the Antarctic Treaty or any Treaty that made a provision similar to that in Article 4 of the Antarctic Treaty.

logistical difficulties and a heavy financial burden if it attempted to enforce its laws within the Australian Antarctic Territories and its adjacent territorial waters and exclusive economic zone. In view of these administrative challenges, as well as the difficulty of predicting the outcome in the event that a confrontation over the status of Australia's sovereign claims in Antarctica does arise, discretion might prove the better part of valour. Therefore, it is proposed that until a much stronger incentive to do otherwise is presented, Australia is likely to avoid acts, which might be deemed provocative, in defence of its sovereign claims within the Antarctic region while the Antarctic Treaty remained in force.

Australia's ambition to play a significant and decisive role in the Antarctic region was clearly revealed in its foreign policy approach during the pre-Antarctic Treaty period. As a middle power, Australia initially sought to entrench its influence within the Antarctic region by supporting the annexation of the Antarctic region by the British Empire. This approach faltered when its sovereign claims to territory on the Antarctic continent were greeted by an almost universal lack of recognition from other states. With the signing of the Antarctic Treaty in 1959, the issue of sovereignty became (arguably) less relevant. Although Australia did not forsake its sovereign claims within the Antarctic region, it appeared prepared to take a less aggressive approach to defend those claims. Nevertheless, Australia has been able to successfully demonstrate its interests in the Antarctic region through its repeated efforts to preserve the status of its sovereignty over the Australian Antarctic Territory. These efforts continue in spite of Australia's subsequent accession and undeniable commitment to the Antarctic Treaty System, and are also regarded as a means to reinforce the legitimacy of its right to a significant role in the Antarctic region.

Middle Power Influence Through Regional Multilateral Institutional Arrangements

Australia's commitment to the Antarctic Treaty represents a reorientation of its initial foreign policy strategy in the Antarctic region. Instead, of a strategy based on the annexation of and sovereignty over Antarctica, Australia pursued its objectives through multilateral institutional arrangements represented by the Antarctic Treaty System. The Antarctic Treaty served many of Australia's interests. The Antarctic Treaty has successfully managed the potential conflict over disputed sovereign claims in the Antarctic region[47] and established viable forums for multilateral decision-making on regional issues. The Antarctic Treaty also initiated and fostered the growth of regional multilateral institutional arrangements, which subsequently evolved into a network of inter-related regimes known as the Antarctic Treaty System and enables a middle power like Australia to defend its interests in the Antarctic region more effectively.

It is argued that Australia has been able to effectively defend its strategic interests, especially with regard to its concerns about potential threats to its security, through the Antarctic Treaty System. And it will be demonstrated that Australia's contemporary influence within the Antarctic region may be credited to its ability, as a wealthy and technologically advanced middle power, to exploit the opportunities

[47] W.C. Clemens, The Superpowers And Arms Control, Lexington Books, Lexington, 1973. pp115 & 141. J. Goldblat, Agreements For Arms Control: A Critical Survey, Taylor and Francis, London, 1982. pp60-63.

offered by the Antarctic Treaty System to set the agenda on regional issues and assume a leadership role.

The Antarctic Treaty

The beginning of the second phase of Australia's involvement with Antarctic was initiated with the signing of the Antarctic Treaty. Australia initially resisted the proposal for an Antarctic Treaty because it harboured hopes that Great Britain, and its loyal dominions including Australia, might yet assume sovereignty over most if not all of Antarctica.[48] However, the fear that the hostilities of the Cold War might be extended to the Antarctic region, as well as the opportunities that emerged with the international cooperation on scientific research in Antarctica during the International Geophysical Year, led to a revision of prior policies in Australia. Thus, Australia signed the Antarctic Treaty in Washington on 1 December 1959 and became one of the 12 original signatories and consultative parties to the Treaty.

Australia's strategic interests in the Antarctic region, especially its concerns about potential security threats from the region, are among the issues addressed by the Antarctic Treaty. As discussed earlier, apprehensions about security have been a well-established feature of Australia's outlook towards the Antarctic region concern and have coloured many of its policies. A study group chaired by Sir Anthony Parsons also observed that "the country which more than any other appears to connect the security condition of Antarctica with its own is Australia." [49] Hemmings has also identified 6 categories of potential military-related activity within the

[48] For a more detailed discussion, see H. Robert Hall, 'International Regime Formation And Leadership: The Origins of the Antarctic Treaty'.

Antarctic Treaty Area; logistic and technical support activities, training and equipment testing, military-utility research, direct military operations, contingency planing for Antarctic operations, and extraneous military factors impacting on Antarctica.[50]

The Antarctic Treaty institutionalised a compromise, which saw a *de facto* suspension of sovereignty claims. This diminished sensitivity towards acts by states that might otherwise be construed as a provocative attempt to enforce or enlarge disputed sovereign claims. In describing the Antarctic Treaty, Beck notes that:

> "Basically, the Antarctic Treaty was designed to create a legal framework for the containment of both existing and potential politico-legal disputes in order to preserve peace and stability in the region and to promote the cause of science and [International Geophysical Year] IGY-type cooperation."[51]

Thus, the Antarctic Treaty provided Australia and other states with the means to ensure that the Antarctic region was not used for purposes that would pose a military threat to them.

The Antarctic Treaty specifically seeks to establish the Antarctic region as a geographic area that is, and would remain, demilitarised. Article 1(1) of the Antarctic Treaty states:

> "Antarctica shall be used for peaceful purposes only. There shall be prohibited, inter alia, any measure of a military nature, such as the establishment of military bases and fortifications, the carrying out of military manoeuvres, as well as the testing of any type of weapon."

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[49] Report of a Study Group, Sir Anthony Parsons (chairman), Antarctica: The Next Decade, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1987. p105.
[50] Alan D. Hemmings, 'Is Antarctica Demilitarised?' in R.A. Herr, H.R. Hall, & M.G. Haward (eds.), Antarctica's Future: Continuity or Change? Tasmania, Australian Institute of International Affairs, 1990. p229.
[51] Peter Beck, The International Politics Of Antarctica. p114.

Article 1 and Article 5 (which ensures that the Antarctic region remained a nuclear free zone) were really intended to address the possibility that the Antarctic region might become an arena for hostilities between the protagonists in the Cold War. However, these provisions dovetailed neatly with Australia's security interests. By prohibiting all military activity within the Antarctic region, the Antarctic Treaty effectively neutralised, or at the very least minimised, the danger of a military threat to Australia from the Antarctic region.

The Antarctic Treaty provisions requiring transparency with regard to all activity in the Antarctic region also serve Australia's strategic interests. Transparency in the Antarctic region provides reassurance, as well as ample warning of any potential threat to Australia that might potentially arise. Hemmings, paraphrasing Article VII of the Antarctic Treaty, notes that:

> "Observers have 'complete freedom of access at any time to any or all areas of Antarctica', all facilities and 'all ships and aircraft at points of discharging or embarking cargoes or personnel in Antarctica' Aerial inspections may be conducted at any time, in the first agreement on an 'open skies' policy. States are to provide advance notice of all expeditions and, of especial significance here, 'any military personnel or equipment intended to be introduced by it into Antarctica subject to the conditions prescribed in paragraph 2 of Article 1 of the present Treaty'."[52]

Therefore, the Antarctic Treaty's prohibition on any military activity within the region south of 60° South, as well as its measures to ensure transparency by granting the right to station observers, conduct aerial surveillance at any time and exchange information, protected Australia's strategic interests within the region.

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[52] Alan D. Hemmings, 'Is Antarctica Demilitarised?' p228.

The demilitarisation of the Antarctic region is also supported by the fact that Article 4 of the Antarctic Treaty suspended the effects of all activities purporting to support claims to sovereignty or rights of sovereignty in Antarctica. This removed the pressure on claimant states to arm themselves in anticipation of a potential military conflict over disputed sovereignty, which has traditionally been one of the primary causes of conflict between states. Article 4 of the Antarctic Treaty states:

> "1. Nothing contained in the present Treaty shall be interpreted as:
>
> (a) a renunciation by any Contracting Party of previously asserted rights of or claims to territorial sovereignty in Antarctica;
> (b) a renunciation or diminution by any Contracting Party of any basis of claim to territorial sovereignty in Antarctica which it may have whether as a result of its activities or those of its nationals in Antarctica, or otherwise;
> (c) prejudicing the position of any Contracting Party as regards its recognition or non-recognition of any other State's rights of or claim or basis of claim to territorial sovereignty in Antarctica.
>
> 2. No acts or activities taking place while the present Treaty is in force shall constitute a basis for asserting, supporting or denying a claim to territorial sovereignty in Antarctica or create any rights of sovereignty in Antarctica. No new claim, or enlargement of an existing claim, to territorial sovereignty in Antarctica shall be asserted while the present Treaty is in force."

Article 4 provides a clause that many have taken to mean the suspension of the legal status of all sovereign claims while the Antarctic Treaty remained in effect. However, even though the Antarctic Treaty stipulated that "no acts or activities taking place while the present Treaty is in force shall constitute a basis for asserting, supporting or denying a claim to territorial sovereignty", this has not stop claimant states from seeking to reinforce the status of their claims. Therefore, in addition to the scientific bases that they established in Antarctica, many claimant states also perform periodic acts of government, such as the issue of stamps, the registration of births, deaths and marriages within their claimed territory in order to demonstrate their continuous administration and preserve their sovereignty. Nevertheless, the

presence of a postmaster on disputed land is far less provocative than that of an armed soldier. Thus, it can be argued that by suspending the status of all sovereignty claims within the Antarctic region, the Antarctic Treaty reduced the incentive to make such claims, as well as the potential for the sort of political and military brinkmanship that usually attend territorial disputes elsewhere.

The Antarctic Treaty allows Australia to avoid a confrontation with those states that dispute its sovereignty over territories and waters within the Antarctic region. It might even be argued that the Treaty provides Australia with a convenient excuse to exempt itself from sovereign obligations that might be deemed too onerous or expensive without sacrificing its claims to the Australian Antarctic Territory. While Article 4 of the Antarctic Treaty is deliberately vague, it does not appear to prevent a claimant state from enforcing its sovereign rights. Instead, it simply preserves those sovereign rights in the face of activities that would normally either erode, create or enlarge a state's claims to sovereignty. Therefore, claimant states could defer their sovereign responsibilities and obligations to regional multilateral arrangements, as well as tolerate activities that may normally challenge their claims to sovereignty, without compromising those claims.[53]

In the absence of the Antarctic Treaty, Australia would have been compelled to defend its sovereign claims to the Australian Antarctic Territory and its adjacent waters. This would include preventing unauthorised entry by foreign nationals, enforcing Australian law (including laws on taxation, criminal justice, and others), preventing the unauthorised exploitation of resources, as well as asserting the other rights and obligations of a sovereign within the Australian Antarctic Territory. Given

the magnitude of the task and its limitations as a middle power, Australia would find it difficult, if not impossible, to unilaterally enforce its jurisdiction over the whole of its Antarctic territories while the legitimacy of its claims to the latter remains almost universally disputed.[54] Certainly, the challenges that Australia encountered while responding to the problem of illegal poaching of Patagonian Toothfish in the undisputed waters off its sub-Antarctic possession of Heard Island suggests that enforcing its jurisdiction in its Antarctic Territories and adjacent waters would be both expensive and difficult.[55] Therefore, it may be argued that Australia is better served by holding the status of its claims to the Australian Antarctic Territory in abeyance through the Antarctic Treaty until a more propitious time when it is better placed to defend those disputed claims, either through international law or sovereign might.

In summary, the Antarctic Treaty and the Antarctic Treaty System enhanced Australia's capacity, as a middle power, to defend its strategic interests within the Antarctic region. In particular, the Antarctic Treaty System enabled Australia to secure its long-standing objective of reducing the possibility of any military threat from the direction of the Southern Continent to Australia by prohibiting any military activity within the region.[56] As Parsons notes, this view is supported by the fact that "the Australian Government has been at pains to point out that the continued demilitarisation of the continent remains a substantial factor in assuring the security

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[53] J.A. Heap, 'Antarctic Sovereignty: A Source Of Stress?', in R.A. Herr, H.R. Hall, & M.G. Haward (eds.), Antarctica's Future: Continuity or Change? Tasmania, Australian Institute of International Affairs, 1990. p187.
[54] Alan Renouf, The Frightened Country. p526.
[55] Richard Herr, 'Patagonian Toothfish Piracy And Poaching: Inter-Regime Issues In CCAMLR Fisheries Management', Polar Oceans and Law of the Sea Workshop, Oslo, Fridtjof Nansen Institute, 2-5 November 1997.
[56] Article 1, The Antarctic Treaty, Done at Washington 1 December 1959.

of Australia."[57] The Antarctic Treaty also protected Australia's strategic interests by ensuring transparency within the region and reducing the potential for conflict by 'suspending' the legal status of sovereignty claims. Therefore, notwithstanding its initial reluctance, Australia has since been a strong supporter of the Antarctic Treaty and the other multilateral institutional arrangements that have sprung up in its wake.[58]

Defending Australian Interests Through The Antarctic Treaty System

With the signing of Antarctic Treaty, multilateral institutional arrangements and the priority that those arrangements placed on science, formed the basis upon which Australia built its influence within the Antarctic region. Australia has no real need to exploit the living or non-living resources in the Antarctic region. Nor given its current environmental is Australia likely to benefit it in any perceptible material fashion from resource exploitation in the Antarctic region, even if its claims there were recognised. Therefore, it is argued that most if not all of Australia's policy objectives in the Antarctic region are currently and effectively met by the Antarctic Treaty System.

Australia's scientific bases and activity in Antarctica have been regarded by some as a testament to Australia's preoccupation with its sovereign claims and the result of its need to maintain a material basis for those claims. However, Australia's scientific bases and research have also been exploited as a currency of influence within the Antarctic region. Through its contributions to Antarctic science and its role in

[57] Report of a Study Group, Sir Anthony Parsons (chairman), Antarctica: The Next Decade, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1987. p105.

regional science agencies, Australia has been able to achieve influence within the Antarctic Treaty System and a significant role in the decision making processes for the Antarctic region.

Australia possesses the capacity to exploit the opportunities offered by regional multilateral institutional arrangements in order to exercise influence within the Antarctic region in several ways. Australia is easily able to satisfy the primary requirements of a consultative party as stipulated by the Antarctic Treaty because it is a middle power that possesses considerable wealth and technological resources. Article 9 subsection 2 of the Antarctic Treaty states:

> "Each Contracting Party which has become a party to the present Treaty by accession under Article XIII shall be entitled to appoint representatives to participate in the meetings referred to in paragraph 1 of the present Article, during such times as that Contracting Party demonstrates its interest in Antarctica by conducting substantial research activity there, such as the establishment of a scientific station or the despatch of a scientific expedition."

As the establishment of an Antarctic scientific station or the 'despatch of a scientific expedition' to Antarctica is a costly exercise, this stipulation obviously limits the number of countries that could claim consultative status. In 1997-1998, Australia's total outlay for its Antarctic Programme came to A$61, 918, 000.[59] The cost of shipping to the Antarctic region averaged A$18 million annually.[60] Moreover, apart from the financial outlays, there is also the opportunity cost of scientific expertise to be considered. The capacity to devote scientific resources to conduct substantial research in Antarctica has been a factor that has limited the number of countries able to claim consultative resources. For many smaller countries, scientific expertise

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[58] The Australian leadership role to preserve the Antarctic Treaty System and defend it against those who seek to replace it with global multilateral arrangements is discussed later in the chapter.
[59] http://www.antdiv.gov.au/misc/government.html

represent scarce resources that are usually committed to military or economic needs, which command a high priority. Therefore, the fiscal, logistical and other costs of active participation in Antarctic affairs meant that small or poor countries had little or no say in Antarctic affairs or the direction of the Antarctic Treaty System.[61] And apart from New Zealand and Finland, which may be described as wealthy and technologically advanced, none of the other consultative parties to the Antarctic Treaty are likely to be regarded as small powers.

Australia's capacity to maintain its status as an Antarctic Treaty Consultative Party (ATCPs) enables it to claim substantial influence within the Antarctic region. ATCPs are responsible for many of the regulatory arrangements implemented within the Antarctic Region. Article 9 subsection 1 confers on ATCPs the right to meet:

> "... at suitable intervals and places, for the purpose of exchanging information, consulting together on matters of common interest pertaining to Antarctica, and formulating and considering, and recommending to their Governments, measures in furtherance of the principles and objectives of the Treaty, including measures regarding:
>
> (a) use of Antarctica for peaceful purposes only;
> (b) facilitation of scientific research in Antarctica;
> (c) facilitation of international scientific cooperation in Antarctica;
> (d) facilitation of the exercise of the rights of inspection provided for in Article VII of the Treaty;
> (e) questions relating to the exercise of jurisdiction in Antarctica;
> (f) preservation and conservation of living resources in Antarctica."[62]

In effect, when consensus is reached among the ATCPs, their recommendations may be regarded as *de facto* 'law' for the Antarctic region.[63] ATCPs are also better

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[60] http://www.antdiv.gov.au/misc/government.html
[61] Peter Beck, The International Politics of Antarctica. p275.
[62] Article 9 (1), The Antarctic Treaty, Done at Washington 1 December 1959.
[63] Article 9 (4), The Antarctic Treaty.

informed about developments in the Antarctic region. Article 7 of the Antarctic Treaty provides Consultative Parties with rights to designate observers, conduct aerial surveillance and be notified on practically all activity within the Antarctic region. The Antarctic Treaty provides for a wide range of measures designed to ensure transparency within the region and ATCPs are assured that reports from designated observers, as well as all other intelligence gathered under the terms of the Antarctic Treaty, is shared with them.[64]

The special status of the ATCPs is also acknowledged in the other multilateral arrangements that form the Antarctic Treaty System. For example, the Convention On The Conservation Of Antarctic Marine Living Resources (CCAMLR) specifically refers to the special role of the ATCPs. Article 5 of CCAMLR states:

> "(1) The Contracting Parties which are not Parties to the Antarctic Treaty acknowledge the special obligations and responsibilities of the Antarctic Treaty Consultative Parties for the protection and preservation of the environment of the Antarctic Treaty area.
> (2) The Contracting Parties which are not Parties to the Antarctic Treaty agree that, in their activities in the Antarctic Treaty area, they will observe as and when appropriate the Agreed Measures for the Conservation of Antarctic Fauna and Flora and such other measures as have been recommended by the Antarctic Treaty Consultative Parties in fulfilment of their responsibility for the protection of the Antarctic environment from all forms of harmful human interference."[65]

The level of influence possessed by the ATCPs may be inferred from the fact that many of the states which are ATCPs are also among those most strongly involved with the other multilateral regulatory instruments in the Antarctic region. Indeed, many of the other multilateral institutional arrangements, including the Convention on the Regulation of Antarctic Mineral Resource Activities and the Convention for

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[64] Article 9 (3), The Antarctic Treaty.
[65] Article 5, Convention On The Conservation Of Antarctic Marine Living Resources, Done at Canberra, 20 May 1980.

the Conservation of Antarctic Seals were initiated by the ATCPs at Consultative Parties meetings. Thus, as an ACTP, Australia enjoys many opportunities to propose and negotiate regulatory measures for the Antarctic region, as well as the right to effectively veto any such measures deemed inimical to its interests.

Advancing Australia's Non Security Related Interests In The Antarctic Region

Australia's early efforts in foreign policy within the Antarctic region were primarily directed at defending its strategic and economic interests and its attempts to bring the Antarctic region under its influence through annexation were intended to accomplish that end. However, since Australia signed the Antarctic Treaty, its objectives have been expanded to include defending 'universal' environmental values and scientific interests in the Antarctic region. In 1989, the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Legal and Constitutional Affairs outlined Australia's interests in the Antarctic region as follows:

> "The Government defined Australia's Antarctic Policy objectives as:
>
> - to preserve our sovereignty over the Australian Antarctic Territory, including our sovereign rights over the adjacent offshore areas;
> - to maintain Antarctica free from strategic and/or political confrontations;
> - to protect the Antarctic environment, having regard to its special qualities and effects on region;
> - to take advantage of the special opportunities Antarctica offers for scientific research;
> - to be informed about and able to influence developments in a region geographically proximate to Australia; and
> - to derive any reasonable economic benefits from living and non-living resources of the Antarctic (excluding the deriving of such benefits from mining and oil drilling)."[66]

[66] House of Representatives Standing Committee on Legal and Constitutional Affairs, Australian Law In Antarctica. p12.

It is clear that Australia's interests in Antarctica have changed over time. For example, Australia's initial interest in securing whaling rights in Antarctic waters and protecting its whaling industry has changed over the years to a stance vehemently opposed to whaling and supportive of a moratorium on whaling in the Southern Ocean.

The objectives cited by the House of Representatives Standing Committee appear to be a fair reflection of Australia's interests in the Antarctic region since it signed the Antarctic Treaty and enjoys bipartisan support.[67] The current Australian government (the Liberal-National coalition 1996-1998) defined its objectives in Antarctica as:

- "maintaining the Antarctic Treaty System and Australia's influence in the System;
- understanding global climate change;
- undertaking scientific work of practical importance; and
- protecting the Antarctic environment."[68]

Thus, apart from its security-related interests, Australia has also focused on the issues of science and the environment in its policies towards the Antarctic Region. Therefore, it is proposed that Australia's enthusiastic endorsement of the Antarctic Treaty System may also be attributed to the fact that these arrangements promote Australia's major policy objectives with respect to the region. Essentially, the Antarctic Treaty System offers a middle power like Australia the opportunity to influence regional policies on the environmental and science, as well as a mechanism to defend those interests effectively.

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[67] Bruce W. Davis and Richard A. Herr, 'ATS Decision-Making and Changes: The Role Of Domestic Politics In Australia'. p3.
[68] http://www.antdiv.gov.au/misc/government.html.

Science An Interest And An Opportunity In The Antarctic Region

As discussed briefly earlier, Australia's ability to exercise influence through the multilateral institutional arrangements for the Antarctic region has been related to its capacity to conduct substantial scientific research in the region. However, in addition to the fact that scientific research bought Australia its ACTP status, science has also been significant in other ways.

Notwithstanding the fact that Australia's commitment to the Antarctic Treaty since its inception has been strong and constant, it can be argued that Australia's confidence in the Antarctic Treaty continues to be tempered by wariness. Thus, even though the Article 4 of the Antarctic Treaty stipulates that no actions by the signatories would add or detract from their sovereign claims during the period while the Treaty was in force, Australia still perceives the necessity to demonstrate the legitimacy of its claims in the Antarctic region. Or as the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Legal and Constitutional Affairs puts it:

> "... the stipulation that acts taking place while the Antarctic Treaty is in force do not constitute a basis for asserting or supporting a claim [does not] mean that those acts are themselves prohibited by the Treaty."[69]

Therefore, in addition to the ostensible purpose of conducting scientific research, Australian scientific bases are maintained at considerable cost in order to highlight Australia's continuous presence and administration within the area it has claimed. Indeed, Professor David Caro, Chairman of the Australian Antarctic Research Policy Advisory Committee argued a connection between research and sovereignty in Antarctica and proposed that Australia's claim to sovereignty would be less plausible

[69] House of Representatives Standing Committee on Legal and Constitutional Affairs, Australian Law In Antarctica. p14.

if it was not matched by active and visible contributions to international scientific research on Antarctica.[70] Therefore, a permanent scientific presence in Antarctica has become the primary basis upon which Australia's sovereign claims there are 'kept alive'.

Australia's expression of interest in the Antarctic region, as well as the basis of its right to influence developments there, has been demonstrated and asserted through its commitment to science in the period following the signing of the Antarctic Treaty. The possession of scientific expertise and other scientific resources provides Australia with a 'ticket' to influential committees and other intergovernmental groups responsible for setting the agenda for decision making in the Antarctic region. The capacity to mobilise scientific research and data to support and legitimate causes has also become an important instrument for lobbying and influencing policy within the Antarctic region. Thus, scientific activity is effectively translated into political influence, thereby giving an additional incentive for scientific research.

The role of science has been highlighted in every Treaty or arrangement within the Antarctic Treaty System. Beginning with the International Geophysical Year in 1958, international co-operation with respect to science in Antarctica has been the norm and a influential epistemic community concerned with Antarctic science has since helped to maintain the important role occupied by science within the Antarctic region. The institutional role of science in the Antarctic region began with the Antarctic Treaty, which formalised the process began in 1958 and opened up Antarctica to scientific research by putting aside the dispute over territorial claims there. Article 2 of the Antarctic Treaty calls for the freedom of scientific

[70] Cited in Peter Beck, The International Politics Of Antarctica. p131.

investigation in Antarctica and co-operation toward that end similar to that demonstrated during the International Geophysical Year. Article 3 of the Antarctic Treaty provides for the exchange of plans for scientific programs in Antarctica, the exchange of scientific personnel between expeditions and stations, and the exchange of and free access to scientific observations and results from Antarctica - to the greatest extent feasible and practicable. Article 9 of the Antarctic Treaty adds a political incentive for states to participate in science by making the display of a strong commitment to scientific research in the Antarctic region a prerequisite to being a Consultative Party to the Antarctic Treaty.

Realists might argue that science in the Antarctic region has had special significance only because of the need to cater to the unique and compelling political circumstances discussed earlier in this chapter, especially as a distraction from the disputed sovereign claims in the Antarctic region. However, the desire "to take advantage of the special opportunities Antarctica offers for scientific research" should also be regarded as a separate and a genuine expression of Australia's interest in scientific research *per se*. It has been noted that Antarctica offers a pristine environment for scientific research not available anywhere else on the planet and that the remote and virgin continent provided the means for scientists to conduct studies not possible in places contaminated by dense human habitation.[71] Australia's interests in Antarctic science enables it to occupy an important niche for specialisation and to play an important role in international scientific research. Antarctic research also provides Australia with important meteorological and oceanographic data that have a direct bearing on the lives and livelihood of many Australians, especially farmers, fishermen, pilots and sailors. The fact that obtaining

[71] Peter Beck, The International Politics Of Antarctica. pp95-111.

such data may also be significant, in terms of incidental surveillance over developments within the Antarctic region that might affect Australian strategic interests, simply adds to its value.

The significance of science in the Antarctic region is also reflected in the fact that each of the treaties comprising the Antarctic Treaty System has made scientific research the basis of decision-making. Article 5 of the Convention for the Conservation of Antarctic Seals (CCAS) pertaining to the exchange of information and scientific advice states:

> "(4) SCAR is invited:
>
> (a) to assess information received pursuant to this Article; encourage exchange of scientific data and information among the Contracting Parties; recommend programmes for scientific research; recommend statistical and biological data to be collected by sealing expeditions within the Convention area; and suggest amendments to the Annex; and
>
> (b) to report on the basis of the statistical, biological and other evidence available when the harvest of any species of seal in the Convention area is having a significantly harmful effect on the total stocks of such species or on the ecological system in any particular locality.
>
> (5) SCAR is invited to notify the Depositary which shall report to the Contracting Parties when SCAR estimates in any sealing season that the permissible catch limits for any species are likely to be exceeded and, in that case, to provide an estimate of the date upon which the permissible catch limits will be reached. Each Contracting Party shall then take appropriate measures to prevent its nationals and vessels under its flag from killing or capturing seals of that species after the estimated date until the Contracting Parties decide otherwise."[72]

Similarly, the preamble to the Convention On The Conservation Of Antarctic Marine Living Resources (CCAMLR) clearly establishes its commitment to the fact that:

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[72] Article 5 (4) & (5), Convention for the Conservation of Antarctic Seals, Done at London on 1 June 1972.

> "... it is essential to increase knowledge of the Antarctic marine ecosystem and its components so as to be able to base decisions on harvesting on sound scientific information."[73]

Article 9 of CCAMLR also indicates that the primary responsibility of its Commission is to conduct scientific research on and provide advice for the conservation of marine living resources in the Antarctic region, which clearly reiterates the importance of science in the decision-making process for the Antarctic region.

Similar provisions giving science a prominent role in the decision making process may be found in the other multilateral institutional arrangements for the Antarctic region. For example, the 'still-born' Convention For The Regulation Of Antarctic Mineral Resources Activities (CRAMRA) places a premium on scientific research and scientific advice. Article 21 of CRAMRA required its Commission (a body not unlike that established for CCAMLR):

> "to facilitate and promote the collection and exchange of scientific, technical and other information and research projects necessary to predict, detect and assess the possible environmental impact of Antarctic mineral resource activities, including the monitoring of key environmental parameters and ecosystem components."[74]

Science as the basis of decision making is again affirmed by the Madrid Protocol to the Antarctic Treaty in 1990. Article 10 of the Protocol requires decision-making by Antarctic Treaty Consultative Parties to draw "upon the best scientific and technical advice available".[75] The Committee for Environmental Protection was established under Article 11 of the Madrid Protocol "to provide advice and formulate

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[73] Convention On The Conservation Of Antarctic Marine Living Resources, Done at Canberra, 20 May 1980.
[74] Article 21, Convention on the Regulation of Antarctic Mineral Resource Activities, Done at Wellington 2 June 1988. The Commission is established under article 18.

recommendations to the Parties in connection with the implementation of [the] Protocol, including the operation of its Annexes".[76] The Committee is also required, "as appropriate, [to] consult with the Scientific Committee on Antarctic Research, the Scientific Committee for the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources and other relevant scientific, environmental and technical organizations."[77] Therefore, science plays a significant role throughout the decision-making processes established by the regional multilateral arrangements for the Antarctic region, and Australia, through its commitment to scientific activity and the Antarctic Treaty System, is able to exercise considerable influence.

Australia's influence and its ability to defend its interests within the Antarctic region have been facilitated by its significant role in Antarctic science, and the strong role that science has played in that region. Australia's deep involvement with Antarctic science raises the possibility that it could potentially influence the agenda on regional issues through science. For example, Australia has an active role in the Scientific Committee for Antarctic Research (SCAR), and SCAR plays an important part in decision-making processes within the Antarctic region. Christopher Beeby observed that "SCAR has from the beginning, and in addition to its other functions, played a major part in providing scientific advice to the system."[78] Indeed, SCAR has many responsibilities and these include its role in helping to set the agenda for ATCP meetings and the fact that it is often consulted for scientific advice and policy

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[75] Article 10, Protocol on Environmental Protection to the Antarctic Treaty, Done at Madrid on 4 October 1991.
[76] Article 12 (1), Protocol on Environmental Protection to the Antarctic Treaty.
[77] Article 12 (2), Protocol on Environmental Protection to the Antarctic Treaty.
[78] Christopher D Beeby, 'The Antarctic Treaty System: Goals, Performance and Impact', in The Antarctic Treaty System In World Politics, Arnfinn Jorgensen-Dahl & Willy Ostreng (eds.), London, MacMillan, 1991. p11.

making by the other regional regulatory arrangements for the Antarctic region.[79] There are 32 state members of SCAR and Australia's prominent role is reflected in the fact that Australians head 2 of the 8 permanent working groups maintained by SCAR, and it is strongly represented in the management and the other programmes of SCAR.[80] While there is no suggestion that scientific advice has been 'rigged' to advance national interests, it would be natural to assume that such advice would tend to reflect the national research priorities of the scientists, as well as the cultural outlook of their respective societies.

Australia, the Antarctic Treaty System and Environmental Values

Australia's significant role in science also enabled it to play a leading role and an effective one in the promotion of environmental values, as well as the implementation of conservation measures that coincide with its own interests, within the Antarctic region. Australia's desire "to protect the Antarctic environment, having regard to its special qualities and effects on region"[81] is also a clear projection of the environmental values and issues that dominate much of its domestic politics.

Australia's environmental agenda for the Antarctic region includes protecting the ecology of Antarctica, its cultural and historical artefacts, as well as the aesthetic value of Antarctica as a pristine wilderness. Indeed, the protection of the Antarctic environment (and indeed all environments) is a policy objective that has become

[79] W.M. Bush, 'The Antarctic Treaty System: A Framework For Evolution, The concept Of A System', in R.A. Herr, H.R. Hall, & M.G. Haward (eds.), Antarctica's Future: Continuity or Change? Tasmania, Australian Institute of International Affairs, 1990. p130.
[80] Chief Officers of permanent working groups include A. Clarke in Geodesy and Geographic Information & Dr D. J. Lugg in Human Biology and Medicine. One of the two current vice-presidents of SCAR is also an Australian, PG Quilty.
[81] House of Representatives Standing Committee on Legal and Constitutional Affairs, Australian Law In Antarctica. p12.

embedded, along with such themes as egalitarianism or social welfare, as a core value in Australian political culture and pursued as a matter of course.

Most, if not all, of the multilateral institutional arrangements comprising the Antarctic Treaty System touch upon environmental issues in some way. The Agreed Measures on Flora and Fauna (1962) established some of the earliest environmental laws for the Antarctic region. CCAS and CCAMLR specifically addressed the issue of conservation of marine life in the Antarctic region. The CCAS dealt with the issue of reviving the seal population in the Antarctic region, which had been decimated by indiscriminate hunting in an earlier era. CCAMLR took up the challenge to conserve and protect all Antarctic marine life. Environmental protection is a major theme of the Madrid Protocol to the Antarctic Treaty. And even though CRAMRA has been called a minerals exploitation regime, its primary concern appears to be to ensure that that activities pertaining to minerals exploration and exploitation do not adversely affect the Antarctic environment. Thus, the emphasis on the conservation and protection of the Antarctic environment in the Antarctic Treaty System accord with Australia's own environmental values and its interests.

Australia's innate capabilities as a middle power, coupled with the opportunities offered by the Antarctic Treaty System has enabled it to defend its environmental values effectively in the Antarctic region. Australia's status as an ATCP and a signatory to the various regional conventions, as well as its significant role in Antarctic science, enables it to exercise considerable influence with regard to its environmental objectives on the Antarctic region. As a Consultative Party to the Antarctic Treaty, Australia held a special status within the Antarctic region. This includes the power to make recommendations binding on non-consultative parties to

the Treaty, privileges pertaining to the appointment of officials on a range of multilateral instruments and the right to be consulted on a variety of issues with regard to the regulation of the Antarctic region. Australia's heavy involvement with Antarctic science and the strong role of science in the regional decision-making processes opened another avenue for influence in the Antarctic region. Certainly, if the experience prior to the Antarctic Treaty is any indication, then Australia has been able to exercise far greater influence through the regional multilateral institutional arrangements for the Antarctic region. One indication of this is the relatively successful implementation of a whale sanctuary in the Antarctic region through the aegis of the Antarctic Treaty System, which contrasts sharply with Australia's failure to prevent Japanese whaling in the region after the Second World War.

In summary, the second phase of Australia's involvement with the Antarctic region marked a shift by Australia towards regional multilateral institutional arrangements as a means of achieving its objectives. The Antarctic Treaty System provided a middle power like Australia with a vehicle to legitimate its interest in the Antarctic region. The general perception is that the decision making process in regional arrangements such as the Antarctic Treaty System is based on multilateral consensus. Thus, such decisions have greater legitimacy than unilateral decisions on matters may affect the interests of more than one state. Australia has also been able to assume an influential role in the decision-making process. Australia's influential position within the Antarctic Treaty System was achieved through its status as an ATCP and its significant role in Antarctic science. Thus, the Antarctic Treaty System provided Australia with the regional influence that it had sought without success through its earlier attempts to annex the Antarctic continent.

A Regional Power

The third phase of Australia's involvement in the Antarctic region is characterised by its resistance to global multilateral arrangements that might have supplanted the Antarctic Treaty System as the primary regulatory authority and forum for decision-making in that region. The trigger for this phase was CRAMRA, which introduced a chain of events that led some developing nations to regard the Antarctic Treaty System as a 'rich man's club'. This resulted in a debate over the status of Antarctica and the appropriate forum for decision-making on issues pertaining to that region. Australia demonstrated its effectiveness as a middle power within the Antarctic region when it successfully led the campaign to reject CRAMRA and when it took up a leadership role to resist the attempt to substitute the Antarctic Treaty System with broader global multilateral arrangements.

This section reviews the role that Australia has played as a regional power to resist the introduction of CRAMRA. It argues that Australia's effectiveness as a middle power within the Antarctic region provided it with sufficient influence to successfully resist developments it does not favour. It further contends that Australia's resistance to CRAMRA should not be seen as opposition to regional regulatory arrangements *per se* but as its government's perception of its domestic political interests and the need to be seen by its constituents as being opposed to any initiative that sanctions mining in Antarctica. And that Australia's leading role in successfully defending and reinforcing the role of regional multilateral arrangements for the Antarctic region against efforts to replace these arrangements with global

multilateral arrangements highlights its commitment to the former and its status as a regional power.

The Power To Say 'No' To CRAMRA

In politics, the power to 'veto' is a highly suggestive indicator of power and influence. Thus, Australia's ability to 'veto' the introduction of CRAMRA in the Antarctic region is significant. Australia's role in defining environmental policy for the Antarctic region, first by rejecting CRAMRA and then by successfully supporting the Madrid Protocol and a moratorium on mining, demonstrates its effectiveness as a middle power and provides proof of its ability to shape developments within the region through multilateral institutional arrangements.

There has always been much speculation about the amount of mineral wealth that could be harvested from Antarctica and the Southern Oceans. Certainly, the possibility of vast untapped resources in the Antarctic region was one of the main incentives that prompted Australia and other states to stake their claims to territory in Antarctica in an earlier era.[82] Christopher Joyner summed up the situation succinctly when he cited Admiral Byrd:

> "In 1953 Admiral Richard Byrd stated that Antarctica was a vast, untouched reservoir of natural resources. He also posited in reference to Antarctica that '[a]s we recklessly squander our natural resources in this country, ... we will come to need new resources. It is imperative that they do not fall into the hands of a potential enemy'."[83]

[82] It was also the reason why developing states attempted to stake a claim to resources within the region under the principle of common heritage. This issue is discussed later in the chapter.
[83] Christopher Joyner, 'The United States And Antarctica: Rethinking The Interplay Of Law And Interests', in Cornell International Law Journal, Vol. 20, 1987. p89.

Thus, attitudes towards mineral resources have traditionally been coloured by the perception of Antarctica as a rich land of mineral resources and many states have exhibited a desire to appropriate this potential source of mineral wealth for themselves. The other factor that has influenced attitudes with regard to mineral resources in Antarctica has been the growing environmental consciousness that began (arguably) in the 1970s. The Stockholm Declaration,[84] the Brandt[85] and Bruntland Reports[86] contributed to the growth of the environmental movement and popular demands for environmental protection. This resulted in the recognition by many states of the need to prevent developmental priorities from compromising ecological values, at least in rhetoric if not always in practice.

The recognition that there was great potential for mining in the Antarctic region was coupled with the desire to protect the region from the adverse effects that might accompany any such activity. In 1975, a proposal by New Zealand to ban all mining activity in Antarctica was rejected.[87] However, in 1970, New Zealand raised the issue again at the sixth ATCP meeting in Tokyo and proposed a regulatory regime for mining activity in the Antarctic region.[88] The interest in the minerals potential of the Antarctic region continued to grow and led to an agreement at an ATCP meeting in 1981 to produce a convention that would regulate all mining activity in the Antarctic region. This resulted in negotiations that eventually resulted in the treaty known as

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[84] Declaration Of The United Nations Conference On The Human Environment, The United Nations Conference on the Human Environment, Having met at Stockholm from 5 to 16 June 1972.
[85] Willy Brandt, North-South: A Programme For Survival: Report Of The Independent Commission On International Development Issues, London, Pan Books, 1980.
[86] World Commission on Environment and Development, Our Common Future, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1987.
[87] Christopher Beeby, 'The Convention on the regulation of Antarctic Mineral Resource Activities and its future'. p49.
[88] Christopher Beeby, 'The Convention on the regulation of Antarctic Mineral Resource Activities and its Future', in R.A. Herr, H.R. Hall, & M.G. Haward (eds.), Antarctica's Future: Continuity or Change? Tasmania, Australian Institute of International Affairs, 1990. pp47-48.

the Convention on the Regulation of Antarctic Mineral Resource Activities (CRAMRA).

Many ATCPs had believed that mining in Antarctica was inevitable and that a blanket ban on mining activities, including the exploration for minerals, was infeasible. CRAMRA was seen as an option that satisfied the demands of political and economic realities while ensuring that the "protection of the Antarctic environment [remained] an over-riding thing running right throughout the text of the Convention."[89] However, CRAMRA floundered when Australia and France decided to reject the Convention. And strong sentiment against mining in the Antarctic region coupled with the promotion of environmental values as the paramount consideration in all policy affecting the Antarctic region resulted in the 'still-birth' of CRAMRA. The Madrid Protocol to the Antarctic Treaty was adopted a few years later.

The capacity of Australia to succeed in pushing its vision of environmental protection for the Antarctic region forward whereas New Zealand failed is suggestive.[90] It raises the argument that in contrast to a small power like New Zealand, Australia as a middle power has sufficient influence within the Antarctic region to make its wishes 'stick'. Australian NGOs led the charge against CRAMRA, and subsequently lobbied strongly and successfully for a moratorium on mining in the Madrid Protocol. Australian politicians and diplomats were also quick and flexible in exploiting the moment, and the activities and energy of the NGOs, to seize a leadership role – first in rejecting CRAMRA, and then in proposing the Madrid Protocol. In both, the opportunities provided by the Antarctic Treaty System proved

[89] Christopher Beeby, 'The Convention on the regulation of Antarctic Mineral Resource Activities and its future'. p52.

crucial and enabled a middle power like Australia to pursue an effective strategy of *middlepowermanship.*

Australia's success in leading the campaign to reject CRAMRA may be attributed to several factors. Where New Zealand had attempted to introduce a new regulatory arrangement for the Antarctic region, Australia was engaged in the relatively more simple task of rejecting a new regulatory arrangement. Article 62 (1) of CRAMRA states:

> "This Convention shall enter into force on the thirtieth day following the date of deposit of instruments of ratification, acceptance, approval or accession by 16 Antarctic Treaty Consultative Parties which participated as such in the final session of the Fourth Special Antarctic Treaty Consultative Meeting, provided that number includes all the States necessary in order to establish all of the institutions of the Convention in respect of every area of Antarctica, including 5 developing countries and 11 developed countries."

In effect, all seven of the claimant states had to ratify the CRAMRA before it could come into effect.[91] Thus, as a claimant state, Australia simply had to exercise its implied right of veto by abstention from the treaty in order to prevent CRAMRA from coming into force. This was also a demonstration of the influence that Australia could wield, as an ATCP, in terms of the regulatory arrangements that were implemented within the Antarctic region. Australia's lead in refusing to sign the convention was quickly followed by France. Other states soon expressed their sympathy for Australia's position and the mood rapidly switched from a desire to regulate all minerals activity to a ban on all minerals activity.[92] Therefore, when Australia seized the option, provided under Article 12 (2a) of the Antarctic Treaty, to

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[90] It may be simply a reflection of the bias of the English speaking world, but it is a curious fact that in the bulk of the literature on CRAMRA, the role of France receives cursory attention while Australia's opposition is covered in considerable detail.

[91] Keith Suter, Antarctica: Private Property or Public Heritage. p46 & p59.

call for a review of the Antarctic Treaty, it was able to successfully propose the Madrid Protocol and a moratorium on mining in Antarctica.

Australia's success might also be due to the possibility that, as a middle power, it had the capacity to mobilise popular opinion and resources that New Zealand lacked. Non government organisations based in Australia, such as the Antarctic and Southern Ocean coalition, could reach across the Pacific to inspire similar groups in the United States and elsewhere and fan the growing international opposition towards minerals activity in the Antarctic region.[93] Australia's leadership on Antarctic issues, as demonstrated by the role that it adopted in defending the status of the ATCPs and the regional arrangements for Antarctica from the challenges in the United Nations initiated by Malaysia in this same period, might also have added to its stature and influence.[94] Thus, Australia was able to succeed in leading a successful challenge to the adoption of CRAMRA, which had hitherto enjoyed both American and British support. And to successfully lead the lobby for a moratorium on all mining activities in the Antarctic region through the adoption of the Madrid Protocol some years later.

Australia's success might also be due to the fact that it pursued a regional strategy. New Zealand's previous proposal for a World Park had the potential to threaten the influence of the ATCPs by 'globalising' the regulation of the Antarctic region. While the details were never fleshed out, New Zealand's proposal for a 'world park' in the Antarctic region, under the regulation of an institution that was 'global' as opposed to 'regional' might also have compromised the sovereign claims of many ATCPs. In

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[92] Keith Suter, Antarctica: Private Property or Public Heritage. p46.
[93] See for example, James N. Barnes, Antarctica: The Politics Of Protection, paper presented at the 16th technical meeting, International Union For Conservation Of Nature And Natural Resources, Madrid, Spain, 5-14 November 1984.
[94] The issue of Australia's role in defending the status of ATCPs and regional arrangements will be discussed at greater depth later in the chapter.

contrast, Australia pursued its interests within Antarctic Treaty System without compromising the influence of the ATCPs or the sovereign claims of the claimant states. While there were accusations levelled against Australia for having caused dissension within the ranks of the ATCPs by its rejection of CRAMRA, nevertheless notwithstanding the failure of CRAMRA itself, the influence of the ATCPs within the Antarctic region remained paramount and the mechanisms of the Antarctic Treaty System remained strong. Moreover, Australia's move to champion the environmental cause within the Antarctic region through the Madrid Protocol was firmly based on the procedures and opportunities afforded by the Antarctic Treaty System, recognition of the primacy of the Article 4 of the Antarctic Treaty and the special position of the ATCPs.[95] Thus, while Australia challenged the illusion of consensus within the Antarctic Treaty System, it had never challenged the system itself.

There is little doubt that Australia exploited environmental causes within the Antarctic region for domestic political reasons.[96] Non government organisations in Australia, such as the Antarctic and Southern Ocean Coalition and Greenpeace, were vigorously opposed to CRAMRA and suspicious of its motives. They believed that the convention might have represented an attempt to open up and divide Antarctica for mining under the guise of environmental concern. The Hawke Labor government was swift to sense the mood of the increasingly 'green' electorate in Australia and respond by joining France in resisting CRAMRA. While the move was regarded by cynicism by some, it did Australia no harm in the eyes of its domestic constituents or among the international environmental lobby, which had grown in influence and strength.

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[95] In particular, see Article 4, Article 5 and Article 6 of the Madrid Protocol to the Antarctic Treaty, 1990.

[96] Bruce W. Davis and Richard A. Herr, ATS Decision-Making and Changes: The Role Of Domestic Politics In Australia. pp8-9.

Bob Hawke, who was Prime Minister at the time, summed up Australia's position on CRAMRA when he said:

> "The Minerals Convention might provide for some a dangerous illusion of environmental protection. But by permitting immediate prospecting and setting out a path by which mining might proceed, it will in fact be working in precisely the opposition direction. So with France, Australia is pursuing the initiative of a comprehensive environmental protection convention which will establish Antarctica as a 'Natural Reserve – Land of Science'."[97]

In essence, this was not dissimilar to the proposition first raised by New Zealand. However, Australia's success might be explained by the argument that it simply championed the right cause at the right time. It was also able to capitalise on the popular sentiment favouring stronger international environmental protection measures following the Exxon Valdez disaster. In exploiting these and the other opportunities provided by the Antarctic Treaty System, in particular, the influence commanded by Consultative Parties, Australia has simply exhibited the classical attributes of *middlepowermanship* to play an influential leadership role as a middle power in the Antarctic region.[98]

The Relationship Between Regional And Global Multilateral Institutional Arrangements

Australia's foreign policy towards the Antarctic region demonstrates a commitment towards multilateralism and regionalism. However, there was tension when broader and more inclusive expressions of multilateralism threatened to erode regionalist

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[97] R.J.L. Hawke, 'Australia's Policy in Antarctica', in R.A. Herr, H.R. Hall, & M.G. Haward (eds.), Antarctica's Future: Continuity or Change? Tasmania, Australian Institute of International Affairs, 1990. p19.

arrangements upon which Australia's influence as a middle power is contingent. Competing interests with regard to the future of Antarctica saw an attempt by developing nations to remove the regional multilateral arrangements for the Antarctic region, or at least subordinate them, and to make global multilateral institutions the principal regulatory instruments for that region. However, Australia successfully resisted this potential erosion of its influence in the Antarctic region, and demonstrated the priority that it places on the Antarctic Treaty System and the importance of such regional arrangements to middle powers.

Before addressing the significance of the tension between regional and global multilateral institutional arrangements for middle powers like Australia in the Antarctic region, it is necessary to briefly review the relationship between these two sets of institutional arrangements. While they may, to some extent be isolated from the general state system, regional subsystems remain inevitably a part of the whole. Thus, the Antarctic Treaty System does not exist in an international vacuum but is situated within the context of the general state system. Normative principles and practices that are an inherent part of global arrangements also shape the nature of regional sub-systems and affect many of the policies implemented within these sub-systems, including the Antarctic Treaty System. Many global agencies are linked with the Antarctic Treaty System. They include the World Meteorological Organisation, the United Nations Environment Program, the Food Aid Organisation, the World Health Organisation, the International Maritime Organisation, the

[98] Refer to Chapter 3 and the discussion of the attributes of *middlepowermanship* espoused by Cox, Cooper, Higgot & Nossal.

International Telecommunications Union, the United Nations Development Program and UNESCO.[99] Stuart Harris observes that:

> "The Antarctic treaty encourages cooperation with UN specialised agencies having a scientific or technical interest in Antarctica, and such scientific or technical interest in Antarctica, and such scientific and technical cooperation, as defined by the ATS parties, has been extensive."[100]

While linkages to global arrangements exist, the parties to the Antarctic Treaty System, especially the ATCPs, have been wary about the involvement of non regional instruments in Antarctic affairs. In particular, after the principle of 'common heritage' grew in significance and was advocated as a principle upon which the management of the Antarctic region should be based, the ATCPs became sensitised to any attempt by global multilateral institutional arrangements to exercise jurisdiction within their bailiwick. Proposals by UNDP and FAO to develop a fisheries program for Antarctica were allegedly headed off by ATS parties.[101] More recent FAO efforts at tentative soundings on adopting CCAMLR as a relevant regional organisation, in terms of the provisions of UNCLOS for fisheries management, and thereby extending the regulatory umbrella of UNCLOS over the Southern Oceans, have not been encouraging. A UNDP proposal for cooperation with ATS in environmental management has also been discouraged.[102]

Oran Young introduced several concepts of inter-regime relationships that might prove useful in illustrating the nature of the linkages between regional multilateral

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[99] Stuart Harris, 'The Influence Of The United Nations On The Antarctic System: A Source Of Erosion Or Cohesion?' in The Antarctic Treaty System In World Politics, Arnfinn Jorgensen-Dahl & Willy Ostreng (eds.), London, MacMillan, 1991. p311.
[100] Stuart Harris, 'The Influence Of The United Nations On The Antarctic System: A Source Of Erosion Or Cohesion?' p312.
[101] Stuart Harris, 'The Influence Of The United Nations On The Antarctic System: A Source Of Erosion Or Cohesion?' p312.
[102] Stuart Harris, 'The Influence Of The United Nations On The Antarctic System: A Source Of Erosion Or Cohesion?' p312.

institutional arrangements such as that represented by the Antarctic Treaty System and more broad-based global arrangements.[103] In particular, three concepts proposed by Young, embedded institutions, nested institutions and overlapping institutional linkages could be used to illustrate various aspects of the relationship between the Antarctic Treaty System and broader global arrangements.[104]

Young defines embedded institutions as:

> "issue-specific regimes in international society [that] are deeply embedded in overarching institutional arrangements in the sense that they assume - ordinarily without saying so explicitly - the operation of a whole suite of broader principles and practices that constitute the deep structure of society as a whole."[105]

The concept of 'embedded-ness' helps to describe some aspects of the Antarctic Treaty System and how they 'fit' within the general state system. Many of the treaties and institutions that make up the Antarctic Treaty System contain assumptions about principles and practices that were derived from traditional expectations and practices from the broader state system. For example, Young points out:

> "Even those who pushed hard to scuttle the Antarctic minerals convention and to replace it with what became the 1991 Protocol to the Antarctic Treaty on Environmental Protection – a set of actors including influential environmental groups with no great interest in perpetuating the dominance of the nation state – contented themselves with the creation of an institutional arrangement that is entirely compatible with the basic rules of international society." [106]

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[103] Oran R. Young, 'Institutional Linkages in International Society: Polar Perspectives', in Antarctica Offshore: A Cacophony of Regimes, Richard Herr (ed.), Hobart, Antarctic CRC, 1995. pp11-23.
[104] Oran R. Young, 'Institutional Linkages in International Society: Polar Perspectives'. p12.
[105] Young, 'Institutional Linkages in International Society', in Global Governance 2, 1996. p3.
[106] Oran R. Young, 'Institutional Linkages in International Society: Polar Perspectives'. p17. A similar approach in identifying linkages based on common principles and practices was adopted by Douglas Johnston. Johnston proposes that different 'mindsets' converge in the development of international institutional arrangements, and that the outcomes depend on the dynamics of the interaction between these mindsets. Douglas M. Johnston, 'Commentary', in Sustainable Development and Preservation of the Oceans: The Challenges of UNCLOS and Agenda 21, Proceedings of the Law of the Sea Institute,

Thus, the precautionary principle, which has been more closely associated with the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, also found expression as one of the guiding principles within the Madrid Protocol to the Antarctic Treaty.[107] Similarly, many of the regional institutional arrangements for the Antarctic region have been guided by global attitudes towards sustainable harvests of living resources, as well as incorporated many other values of the global environmental movement.

'Nested institutions' go beyond the shared premises of 'embedded institutions' and often suggest a legal relationship wherein jurisdictional responsibility from a 'parent institution' is delegated to a 'nested institution'. In contrast to embedded institutions, Young defines 'nested institutions' as:

> "... linkages in which specific arrangements restricted in terms of functional scope, geographic domain, or some other relevant criterion are folded into broader frameworks that deal with the same general issue area but that are less detailed in terms of their application to specific problems. In effect, the nested components bring the premises of a broader regime - rather than the constitutive principles or rules of international society as a whole - to bear on specific topics."[108]

Thus, it could be argued that the discrete arrangements represented by CCAMLR or the CCAS are 'nested' within the Antarctic Treaty System, whereas the entire Antarctic Treaty System is 'embedded' within the framework of international and customary international law. There are also some elements of the Antarctic Treaty System, including CCAMLR, which are clearly 'nested' within global arrangements.

Twenty-Ninth Annual Conference, Mochtar Kusuma-Atmadja, Thomas A. Mensah, & Bernard H. Oxman (eds.), Honolulu, Law of the Sea Institute, 1997. pp76-78.

[107] Article 3(2)(c), Protocol on Environmental Protection to the Antarctic Treaty, Done at Madrid on 4 October 1991.

[108] Oran Young, 'Institutional Linkages in International Society'. p3.

CCAMLR defers regulation of whaling to the IWC, which may be considered a 'global arrangement'. Article 6 of CCAMLR states:

> "Nothing in this Convention shall derogate from the rights and obligations of Contracting Parties under the International Convention for the Regulation of Whaling".[109]

The 'deference' to a global regulatory framework may also be seen in the way the Madrid Protocol referred the details for regulating ship-sourced pollution to MARPOL. Article 3(1) of Annex 4 to the Madrid Protocol states:

> "Any discharge into the sea of oil or oily mixture shall be prohibited, except in cases permitted under Annex I of MARPOL 73/78."[110]

Article 5(3) of Annex 4 to the Madrid Protocol also states that:

> "The disposal into the sea of food wastes may be permitted when they have been passed through a comminuter or grinder, provided that such disposal shall, except in cases permitted under Annex V of MARPOL 73/78, be made as far as practicible from land and ice shelves but in any case not less than 12 nautical miles from the nearest land or ice shelf."[111]

Nested institutions represent more than a simple functional distribution of jurisdictional responsibility and may also imply that 'parent arrangements', within which more specific and restricted arrangements 'nest', have precedence. Thus, there have been efforts to resist the inclusion of Antarctic institutional arrangements as 'nested institutions' within the more 'universal' frameworks of some global arrangements. For example, issues pertaining to Antarctica and the Southern Oceans

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[109] Article 6, Convention On The Conservation Of Antarctic Marine Living Resources, Done at Canberra, 20 May 1980.
[110] Article 3 (1), Annex 4 to Protocol on Environmental Protection to the Antarctic Treaty, Done at Madrid on 4 October 1991.
[111] Article 5(3), Annex 4 to Protocol on Environmental Protection to the Antarctic Treaty.

were deliberately ignored and left vague during the negotiations of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea.

The status of the relationship between the discrete elements of the Antarctic Treaty System and the legal framework represented by the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea remains ambiguous. In particular, there has been dispute over whether CCAMLR could, or should, be 'nested' as a 'competent regional organisation' within the framework of the United Nations Convention on Straddling Fish Stocks and Migratory Species (which itself is 'nested' within the framework of the UNCLOS).[112] Notwithstanding the quibbling over whether CCAMLR was a conservation regime or a fisheries regime,[113] a significant issue is whether 'nesting' CCAMLR within the framework of a global arrangement would result in a situation that erodes the influence and position of the parties to CCAMLR.[114]

It could be questioned if some of these examples of linkages between a regional institution and a global one could be defined as 'nesting.' In Young's definition of a nested institution, the inference is that the nested institution 'fleshes-out' the general principles for regulation established by the broader institution. However, in the case of CCLAMR and the Madrid Protocol, it was not the 'nested institutions' that provided the specific details of regulation, but the 'broader' global but functionally specific arrangements. Nevertheless, the substantive issue addressed by the concept of 'nested institutions', that of institutional linkages based on one institution

[112] Article 63 (straddling stocks in EEZ) and 64 (highly migratory species in EEZs) and article 118 (High Seas) of UNCLOS all call for the cooperation of states and/or the establishment of sub-regional or regional fisheries organisations to ensure the conservation and protection of marine living resources.

[113] Chile objected to the proposal that CCAMLRs might be 'nested' within the Convention on Straddling Fish Stocks and Migratory Species as a competent regional organisation on the grounds that CCAMLR was a 'conservation regime' and not a 'fisheries regime'. See CCAMLR, Report of the Fourteenth Meeting of the Commission, Hobart, Australia, 24 October – 3 November, 1995, pp57-58.

deferring the details of regulation to another does describe the relationship between CCAMLR and the IWC, and between the Madrid Protocol and MARPOL. It also highlights the possible reluctance of states to compromise vested interests in regional arrangements and dilute their influence by accepting linkages that see the latter 'nested' inside broader institutional arrangements, especially as they might have a less significant role within the latter.

Finally, Young describes overlapping institutional linkages as "individual regimes that were formed for different purposes and largely without reference to one another [that] intersect on a de facto basis, producing substantial impacts on each other in the process."[115] The main feature that distinguishes Young's concept of overlapping institutions from embedded institutions or nested institutions is the fact that overlapping institutions are usually unintended, unexpected, or unforeseen. There is usually an element of deliberation involved with respect to the other forms of institutional linkages, where institutions were consciously grafted onto a chosen framework or functionally integrated. In contrast, deliberate intent is often absent, at least initially, with respect to Young's concept of overlapping institutions. Thus, as the United Nations Law of the Sea and the Antarctic Treaty System were formed for different purposes and largely without reference to one another, and their regulatory arrangements could result in substantial impact on each other, they might be regarded as overlapping institutions.

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[114] See Richard Herr, 'Patagonian Toothfish Piracy And Poaching: Inter-Regime Issues In CCAMLR Fisheries Management'. pp17-21.
[115] Oran Young, 'Institutional Linkages in International Society'. p6.

The significance of institutional overlap within the Antarctic region lies in the fact that there is a potential for conflict.[116] Scholars such as Herr, Rothwell and Davis have alluded to this possibility for conflict citing jurisdictional overlap between regional and global regulatory arrangements as a potential cause.[117] Middle powers, such as Australia, would also be sensitive to the implications of the linkages between regional and global institutional arrangements. The key issue for countries like Australia is the fear that the influence of ATCPs would be eroded in Antarctica by global arrangements. Where global arrangements were resisted, a serious concern is the consequences that might result from the potential conflict between regulatory arrangements with overlapping jurisdiction. Therefore, it is argued that the challenge for a middle power like Australia within the Antarctic region has been to avoid institutional 'nesting' where its interests and influence may be compromised and to resolve the issue of institutional overlap.

A Leadership Role For Australia In Regional Arrangements

Discussions about merits of regional arrangements, such as that represented by the Antarctic Treaty System, vis-à-vis global arrangements with a broader scope in terms of membership and interests, are often phrased in terms of what is best for the region. However, the reality is that such issues are often approached from the perspective of

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[116] Herr, R. and E. Chia, 'The Concept of Regime Overlap: Toward Identification and Assessment', in Senior Practitioners Workshop on Overlapping Maritime Regimes, held in March 1995, B. W. Davis(ed.), Hobart, Tasmania, Antarctic CRC Monograph. 2, 1995, pp11-26.

[117] Richard Herr, 'Antarctica Offshore's Order: The Cacophony And Harmony Of Overlapping Regimes', in Antarctica Offshore: A Cacophony of Regimes, Richard Herr (ed.), Hobart, Antarctic CRC, 1995. Donald Rothwell, 'A Maritime Analysis Of Conflicting International Law Regimes In Antarctica And The Southern Ocean', in The Australian Year Book Of International Law 1994, Volume 15, Canberra, Centre for International and Public Law, Faculty of Law, Australian National University, 1994. Davis, B. W. and M. Haward, Oceans Policy and Overlapping Regimes: An Australian Perspective, Canadian Coastal Zone Conference, September 1994, P. Wells and P. Ricketts (eds.), Halifax, Nova Scotia, Coastal Zone Canada Association (CZCA), Bedford and Institute of Oceanography, Dartmouth. 1: 155-164.

state interests. The conflicting priorities and interests that emerged with the issue of CRAMRA highlight some of the underlying concerns with regard to both regional and global multilateral institutional arrangements.

Ostensibly, CRAMRA was not meant to convey the notion "that mining in Antarctica is acceptable or should or will take place".[118] Instead, Christopher Beeby argues that CRAMRA:

> "... can best be characterised as an assessment regime. ... a mechanism for assessing the possible impact on the environment of Antarctic mineral resource activities, determining whether they are acceptable and, if so, regulating them in detail."[119]

Nevertheless, whatever the real intent of CRAMRA was, it soon became clear that many states, especially developing nations, held the impression that CRAMRA was essentially a title deed to the mineral wealth of Antarctica. There is also suspicion that the sudden interest in matters Antarctic displayed by better endowed Third World nations (who were able to achieve consultative party status quickly) had been motivated more by minerals than by an interest in Antarctic science (especially when the latter was hitherto demonstrably lacking).

In particular, Malaysia has been very suspicious of the ATCPs and has argued that the ATCPs had an agenda to seize Antarctica for their own gain while the rest of the world 'lost out' on the last great land and resource grab.[120] Thus, in spite of the protestations of some ATCP members, CRAMRA was regarded with suspicion by

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[118] Christopher Beeby, 'The Convention on the regulation of Antarctic Mineral Resource Activities and its future'. p49.
[119] Christopher Beeby, 'The Convention on the regulation of Antarctic Mineral Resource Activities and its future'. p49.
[120] Mr Zainal Abidin, speaking before the UN General Assembly, resolution 2222 (XXI), annex), in Antarctica In International Affairs, B,A, Hamzah 9ed.). p166. The issue of conflict between the regional arrangements favoured by ATCPs and global arrangements favoured by many Third World Nations would be discussed in greater detail later in this chapter.

many other developing states who were concerned that they might 'lose out' on any economic activity in the Antarctic region. This suspicion towards the Antarctic Treaty System and the desire to be included in any potential distribution of wealth led many Third World states to challenge the validity of the regional arrangements in the Antarctic region. Developing nations declared that Antarctica should be considered the common heritage of mankind and attempted to supplant the Antarctic Treaty System with global arrangements that would better defend their interests and their stake in any potential share of wealth.

The effort to 'internationalise' the Antarctic region, by having global institutional arrangements play a greater role in the management and regulation of Antarctic affairs, has had a long history.

> "In 1947, Admiral Richard Byrd used a flight over the South Pole ... to drop a cardboard box containing multi-colored little flags of the United Nations as an 'obvious symbolism' of his desire for international harmony in Antarctica, perhaps achieved under the UN."[121]

New Zealand has also expressed an interest in the creation of a World Park in Antarctica and even indicated its preparedness to surrender its sovereign claims in deference to global ownership.[122] In 1956, Walter Nash, Prime Minister of New Zealand mooted the idea of making Antarctica a 'world territory' under the custodianship of the UN but his proposal was rejected.[123] India made two attempts to place the issue of Antarctica's status on the UN General Assembly agenda in 1956

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[121] Peter Beck, The International Politics of Antarctica. p270.
[122] James N. Barnes, 'Antarctica: The Politics Of Protection', paper presented at International Union For Conservation of Nature And Natural Resources, 16th Technical Meeting, Madrid, Spain, 5-14 November 1984. p3.
[123] Peter Beck, The International Politics of Antarctica. p272.

and in 1958.[124] The first was withdrawn and the Antarctic Treaty, which established a regional regulatory arrangement for the Antarctic region, rendered India's second attempt moot.[125] The most recent and perhaps most serious of the efforts to extend global regulatory arrangements over the Antarctic region emerged with the development of the concept of 'common heritage' as a principle of the Law of the Sea.

Questions on the status of the Antarctic region in global institutions, such as the Law of the Sea, have often been tactfully avoided. However, the absence of permanent human habitation in the Antarctic region, along with the vision that that the region could become the 'common heritage of mankind' set the scene for discord over the status of the region during the 80s. The failure of global institutions to specifically recognise the special position of the claimant and potential claimant states in Antarctica raised several issues. In the absence of a recognised sovereign, many developing states sought to have the Antarctic region declared the common heritage of mankind.[126] With Malaysia's leadership, many Third World countries challenged the legitimacy of the Antarctic Treaty System and advocated the introduction of global arrangements that would oversee activities in Antarctica.[127]

Dr Mahathir's call for the Antarctic region to be recognised as the common heritage of mankind and to be administered by the United Nations in the interests of the international community struck a chord with many developing nations. Many

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[124] India's subsequent accession to the ATS met with heavy criticism from developing countries and that move has been described as a conflict between "India's moral stake in Antarctica" and "her national priorities". R.C. Sharma & P.C. Sinha, India's Ocean Policy, New Delhi, Khama Publishers, 1994. pp187-189

[125] Peter Beck, The International Politics of Antarctica. p272.

[126] Christopher C. Joyner & Ethel R. Theis, 'The United States And Antarctica: Rethinking The Interplay Of Law And Interests', in Cornell International Law Journal, 20, 1987. pp93-97.

developing nations harboured suspicions about the Antarctic Treaty System and Dr Hamzah voiced some of these suspicions when he argues:

> "Yet some members of the ATCP have made strenuous efforts to develop the resources even though the treaty is silent on this point. Since 1967, ATCP members have discussed the development of a mechanism to circumvent the treaty and began negotiating among themselves for ways and means of exploiting the resources in Antarctica. Finally in 1972, the ATCPs broke their covenant and agreed to promote the idea of an Antarctica Mineral Regime to govern resource development on the continent."[128]

Hamzah also referred to Antarctica as 'mankind's last treasure house other than deep sea resources'.[129] This perception appeared to be shared by many developing states and suggested that their priorities and interest in the Antarctic region lay primarily in obtaining a 'fair share' of any exploitation of deep sea resources. The concern that they would 'lose out' was reinforced by their belief that some of the scientific programmes in Antarctica were really a covert effort to explore for mineral wealth.[130] The effort to 'internationalise' the management and regulation of the Antarctic region was also supported by some environmental NGOs, albeit for different reasons. Developing countries feared losing a share of any mineral exploitation, environmentalists feared any mineral development, and both saw global arrangements as their best means of defending their interests.[131]

In contrast, it was clear that the ATCPs, including Australia, desired to retain control over events in the Antarctic region and to prevent the erosion of their influence and

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[127] Vasiliy S. Safronchuk, 'The Relationship between the ATS and the Law of the Sea Convention of 1982', in The Antarctic Treaty System In World Politics, Arnfinn Jorgensen-Dahl & Willy Ostreng (eds.), London, MacMillan, 1991. p328.
[128] B.A. Hamzah, 'Antarctica and the International Community: A Commentary', in Antarctica In International Affairs, Kuala Lumpur, Institute of Strategic and International Studies, 1987. pp4-5.
[129] B.A. Hamzah, 'Antarctica and the International Community: A Commentary'. p4.
[130] B.A. Hamzah, 'Antarctica and the International Community: A Commentary'. p7.
[131] Lyn Goldsworthy, 'Conservation and Antarctic Policy-Making B. 'World Park Antarctica': An Environmentalist Vision', in R.A. Herr, H.R. Hall, & M.G. Haward (eds.), Antarctica's Future: Continuity or Change? Tasmania, Australian Institute of International Affairs, 1990. p93.

interests.[132] The Antarctic Treaty System provided countries like Australia with considerable influence within the region and there was concern that global institutions might dilute the influence of the ATCPs, who would have greater difficulty exerting a similar level of influence within the larger and more diverse membership of global institutions. Therefore, the ATCPs resisted the attempts to extend the regulation of Antarctica and the Southern Oceans beyond the restricted scope of the Antarctic Treaty System.[133]

In the debates that ensued after Malaysia initiated its challenge to the Antarctic Treaty System at the UN General Assembly in 1982, Australia established itself as the leader of the proponents of the Antarctic Treaty System.[134] At the 1984 General Assembly debates, Richard Woolcott, then chairman of the Consultative Parties led the defence in support of the Antarctic Treaty System.[135] Australia made clear its opposition to any change that would replace or undermine the authority of the regional arrangements in place with an arrangement that allowed 'universal' participation.[136]

In defence of the Antarctic Treaty System, the ATCPs argued that "their successful administration of Antarctica gives them special rights and responsibilities."[137] They also argued that the Antarctic Treaty System had successfully demilitarised

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[132] Peter Beck, The International Politics of Antarctica. p271.
[133] Australia was not the only power to do so. Argentina, another middle power and also a Consultative Party to the Antarctic Treaty also resisted efforts to broaden active participation in Antarctic affairs. An attempt to raise the issue of Antarctica at the 1976 Non-Aligned Conference by Sri Lanka, with a view towards reconciling the management of Antarctica with the interests of the wider international community was scuttled by Argentina. See Peter Beck, The International Politics of Antarctica. p277.
[134] Keith Suter, Antarctica, Private Property or Public Heritage. p79.
[135] Peter Beck, The International Politics of Antarctica. p293.
[136] Vasiliy S. Safronchuk, 'The Relationship between the ATS and the Law of the Sea Convention of 1982'. p331.
[137] Stuart Harris, 'The Influence Of The United Nations On The Antarctic System: A Source Of Erosion Or Cohesion?' p316.

Antarctica keeping it free from state-sponsored violence, promoted the pursuit of scientific knowledge and protected the fragile environment of Antarctica and the Southern Oceans. While these arguments were certainly valid, there were other factors to suggest that the ATCP's reluctance to surrender their influence over the Antarctic region has been the primary reason for their stout resistance to global arrangements.

The challenge to the Antarctic Treaty System threatened the interests of the claimant states (and potential claimants). These states regarded the Antarctic region as a special place, where the exercise of their sovereign rights and claims have been temporary suspended but never abandoned. All parties to the Antarctic Treaty System acknowledge the principles of Article 4 of the Antarctic Treaty, which protected the interests of the claimant states and potential claimants alike. In contrast, no global regime has, as yet, recognised the special character of sovereignty within the Antarctic region.

MARPOL did recognise the environmental sensitivity of Antarctica and declared it a 'special area' in 1991, prohibiting all operational discharges except under cases of extreme peril.[138] Similarly, the IWC did establish a whale sanctuary south of 40° south in 1994 where a moratorium on whaling has been imposed. Nevertheless, while the fragility of the Antarctic environment is readily recognised by the global community, the special interests of the claimant states and potential claimants have yet to be universally accepted. Indeed, the special position of the ATCPs within the Antarctic region has been hotly disputed. Thus, it is feared that if global institutions (especially those established on the principle of common heritage) assumed

[138] IMO Document 30/24.

regulatory responsibility for the Antarctic region, the result might be the extinguishment of any latent rights of sovereignty or future claims to sovereignty within Antarctica. The concern that an 'international solution' developed at the global level might compromise existing sovereignty claims in Antarctica, as well as result in 'outside interference' in Antarctic affairs, were significant factors that moved the ATCPs to resist global multilateral institutional arrangements for the Antarctic region.[139]

The attempt by Dr Mahathir and others to extend the jurisdiction of the United Nations into the Antarctic region and to claim the Southern Oceans as high seas demonstrated the potential of conflict within overlapping institutional arrangements.[140] In this instance, there was an attempt to use global arrangements to wrest 'authority' from regional arrangements in the Antarctic region. At issue was whether influence over the Antarctic region would be shifted from the ATCPs to the global forums like the United Nations. At risk were the national interests of the ATCPs, especially those who have made territorial claims on Antarctica. Australia clearly demonstrated its wariness of global arrangements that might result in the erosion of its influence and compromise its interests in the Antarctic region. And as a middle power, Australia successfully assumed a leadership role to oppose the efforts of those who would supplant the Antarctic Treaty System with global regulatory arrangements.

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[139] Stuart Harris, 'The Influence Of The United Nations On The Antarctic System: A Source Of Erosion Or Cohesion?' p309.

[140] Statement by Dato' Seri Dr Mahathir Bin Mohamad on Antarctica at the 37th Session of the United Nations General Assembly in New York on 29th September 1982.

Conclusion

Australia has always demonstrated its clear and unambiguous ambition to assume a prominent role in the Antarctic region. Initially, Australia, as a part of the British Empire, had sought a controlling influence over the Antarctic region through the annexation of Antarctica. However, its efforts in this regard met with limited success. Although Australia lays claim to a large slice of Antarctica, that claim has never been recognised, save by a very few states. In contrast, since the adoption of the Antarctic Treaty, a weave of regional multilateral arrangements represented by the Antarctic Treaty System has provided Australia with the opportunity to play an influential role in determining policy and regulatory arrangements for the Antarctic region. This accorded with the expectations of process oriented perspectives on how a middle power like Australia could and would play a leading role in international affairs.

Australia's prominent role within the Antarctic Treaty System, especially its status as an ATCP and a middle power, became the basis of its influence. Australia's capacity for leadership and influence was manifested in the role that it played in rejecting CRAMRA and in the subsequent adoption of the Madrid Protocol to ensure environmental protection for the Antarctic region. Australia exhibited its regionalist priorities when it defended the Antarctic Treaty System, as well as its own vested interests and influence in the Antarctic region, from the challenge of multilateral institutional arrangements constituted at a global level. In doing so, Australia demonstrated the fact that, as a middle power, its interests are bound to regional multilateral institutional arrangements and its influence is founded upon its capacity to assume a leadership role in such arrangements.

CHAPTER 6

> "The continuing differential in growth rates between Australia and industrialising East Asia has implications for Australia's relative position in the region. In terms of economic size, and technological and industrial sophistication, Australia will remain a significant regional country. However, the gap in these areas with industrialising East Asia will narrow over the next fifteen years. Consequently, Australia will be able to rely less on its strategic and economic weight in the region to achieve its policy objectives." – In the National Interest, Australia's Foreign and Trade Policy White Paper[1]

Introduction

Australia has always demonstrated a keen interest in the South East Asia and one of the key priorities of its foreign policy has been to defend its vital national interests within that region. However, Australia's ability, as a middle power, to assume a hegemonic role in South East Asia is limited. Thus, it is argued that the role that a middle power like Australia is able to assume in international relations varies with its geography, as well as the extent of its ability to engage in regional multilateral institutional arrangements.

The two attributes of a middle power that have enabled Australia to assume a role of influence within the South Pacific and the Antarctic region have had less relevance in the South East Asian region. Australia's ability to assume hegemonic influence in the

South East Asian region has been limited by the fact that its relations with the South East Asian states are not characterised by the same asymmetries of power that shaped its relationship with the South Pacific island states. In contrast to the Antarctic region, there are few regional multilateral institutional arrangements within the South East Asian region and these are far less comprehensive in scope. Thus, Australia's capacity to influence developments in the South East Asian region has also been limited by the fact that the central and prominent role that it played in the regional multilateral institutional arrangements for Antarctica could not be reprised in the South East Asian region.

Australia's influence within the South East Asian region is also affected by the question of its status. Whereas Australia evinced a desire to be perceived as a part of South Pacific and Antarctic region and is accepted (albeit grudgingly at times) as a part of those regions, Australia has yet to be accepted as an integral part of the South East Asia region. Indeed, Australia is ambivalent about the question of its role and identity as a part of South East Asia. These factors constrained Australia's capacity, as a middle power, to assume an influential role within the South East Asian region and it has had to continuously guard against being marginalised in or excluded from the South East Asian region.

The difficulties that confronted Australia in the South East Asian region highlight some of the limitations of a middle power, as well as the significance of regionalism, in middle power diplomacy. It is proposed that the capacity to initiate and encourage multilateralism within a regional context and to seek a greater role within such structures represent Australia's most promising prospect for influence and the

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[1] In the National Interest: Australia's Foreign and Trade Policy White Paper, Canberra, Commonwealth of Australia, 1997. p25.

opportunity to shape developments within the South East Asian region. Thus, Australia has exerted itself to promote regional multilateral institutional arrangements within the South East Asian region. And by doing so, it pursued a strategy of *middlepowermanship* and acted in a manner consistent with the expectations of a middle power.

In contrast to the earlier 'regional chapters' where Australia's regional foreign policy could be neatly encapsulated within defining periods, Australia's diplomatic engagement with the South East Asian region is less easily situated within chronological periods separated by pivotal changes in history. If there has been a defining moment, then it could arguably be described as the early 1990s when an Australian Labor government embarked on an enthusiastic quest to increase consciousness of Asia within Australia.[2] However, as the debate over Australia's Asian identity has been initiated much earlier, it may be more prudent to assume a gradual change characterised by ambivalence in Australian attitudes towards South East Asia, instead of stipulating a chronological reference point from which a clear divide in terms of policy occurred. Therefore, in contrast to the approach adopted in the two preceding chapters, the discussion in this chapter is organised in terms of Australia's interests in the South East Asian region and its capacity to realise its ambitions there.

This chapter begins by reviewing Australia's long-standing strategic interest in the South East Asian region. It outlines the changes that have seen Australia's interests in the South East Asian region grow from narrow security concerns to an expanding economic stake affecting its broader strategic interests. Australia's need to defend its

[2] Paul Keating, 'Australia And Asia: Knowing Who We Are', speech given in Sydney, Australia, 7 April 1992.

these interests fuel its ambition to assume significant influence within the South East Asian region. However, it is proposed that while Australia had played a hegemonic role in the past, its capacity to assume a similar role in the contemporary South East Asian region is limited.

Australia's role in regional multilateral institutional arrangements within the South East Asian region has been limited. It is not a full member of the Association of South East Asian Nations even though it is a dialogue partner. Nevertheless, Australia has continued to pursue the strategy of *middlepowermanship* within the South East Asian region, albeit in an indirect fashion. Instead of reprising the high profile leadership role that it had adopted in regional multilateral institutional arrangements in the two regions reviewed earlier, Australia played a more discreet role, with a stronger emphasis on 'track two diplomacy', in the South East Asian region. Australia's diplomacy has been centred upon fostering an environment within South East Asia that is conducive to multilateralism and regionalism, and encouraging the eventual development of formal institutions to facilitate both. Therefore, although Australia's direct influence in the South East Asian region has been limited, it has nevertheless been able to play a significant role as a middle power within the region.

Defining South East Asia

Source: Perry-Castañeda Library Map Collection, University of Texas at Austin, http://www.lib.utexas.edu/Libs/PCL/Map_collection/Map_collection.html

There has always been an understanding within the international community that the boundaries of South East Asia stretched from Myanmar to the West, Vietnam to the North, and Indonesia to the East and South.[3] In general, the South East Asian region is deemed to include Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam. In one sense, this has been a region defined by great powers, as when the Allied Forces in World War Two defined the region as the South East Asian Theatre of Operations.[4] This classification gained

[3] Donald G. McCloud, 'Southeast Asia As A Regional Unit', in The ASEAN Reader, compiled by K.S. Sandhu, Sharon Siddique, Chandran Jeshurun, Ananda Rajah, Joseph L.H. Tan, Pushpa Thambipillai, Singapore, Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 1992. p12.

[4] Russel H. Fifield, 'The Southeast Asia Command', in The ASEAN Reader, compiled by K.S. Sandhu, Sharon Siddique, Chandran Jeshurun, Ananda Rajah, Joseph L.H. Tan, Pushpa Thambipillai, Singapore, Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 1992. pp20-23.

currency and persisted through to the Cold War.[5] The concept of a South East Asian region is also tautological, and it could be said that the boundaries of this region were based on arbitrary stipulation and perceptions of common interests held by leaders within 'the region'.[6]

Historically, Myanmar and the states in Indo-China have had little to do with Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, Brunei or the Philippines.[7] However, the concept of a South East Asian region proved to be compelling, both as a label and an aspiration, for the modern South East Asian states. The commitment to the concept of a South East Asian region could be seen in the considerable efforts of the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) to expand its membership from its five founders, to include all ten of the states that are deemed to be 'South East Asian'.[8] Thus, the South East Asian nations differentiated themselves from the three great cultural traditions and potential spheres of influence that surrounded them, China in the North, India and its satellites in the West, and Australia (ironically representing the West) in the East.

Membership of ASEAN has become a mark of being formally recognised as a South East Asian state. There have been attempts to broaden the definition of 'South East Asian', in terms of enlarging the membership of the ASEAN. Sri Lanka, Papua New Guinea and Australia, all nations on the geographical periphery of what is presently defined as the South East Asia region had all made tentative probes with regard to membership in ASEAN, with varying degrees of seriousness and publicity attending

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[5] Bilveer Singh, The Challenge of Conventional Arms Proliferation in Southeast Asia, Jakarta, Centre For Strategic and International Studies, 1995. pp4-25.
[6] See Theodore Olson, 'Thinking Independently About Strategy In Southeast Asia', in Contemporary Southeast Asia, Vol. 11, No. 3, December 1989.
[7] D. G. E. Hall, A history of South-East Asia, London, Macmillan, 1968.

their efforts.[9] However, such attempts have, thus far, been unsuccessful. The significance of membership in ASEAN lay in the fact that membership conferred legitimacy, at least in South East Asian eyes, upon the interests of a member within the region. It implied recognition of the member-state as a primary stakeholder in the region with the concomitant right to speak out on and participate in processes that affected decision-making on key issues affecting the region. It also inferred the right to be consulted and to be involved in decision-making processes. There are, however, some exceptions to these normative expectations. While members of ASEAN tend to be considered South East Asian states, not all states deemed to be South East Asian have been granted membership of ASEAN. In 1997, Cambodia was denied membership because of lingering doubts over the legitimacy of the Hun Sen government, in spite of a strong desire by many ASEAN states that the former be eventually admitted.[10] Thus, ASEAN could not be regarded as being synonymous with the South East Asia region – yet. The other qualifier is the recognition that some states considered to be 'extra-regional' might also reasonably claim to possess strong interests within the region. These states are accorded observer status in ASEAN and engaged in regular dialogue with ASEAN. Australia currently falls into this category. Hence, while Australia has not been regarded 'formally' as a part of the South East Asian region, it is seen as an extra-regional actor with special interests within the region.

It is in the context of its ambiguous status that Australia's role, as a middle power, within the South East Asian region should be examined. Australia's ambivalence

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[8] Ranjit Gill, ASEAN Towards The 21st Century: A Thirty-Year Review Of The Association Of Southeast Asian Nations, London, ASEAN Academic Press, 1997. pp225-236.

[9] Thanat Khoman, 'ASEAN: Conception And Evolution', in The ASEAN Reader, compiled by K.S. Sandhu, Sharon Siddique, Chandran Jeshurun, Ananda Rajah, Joseph L.H. Tan, Pushpa Thambipillai, Singapore, Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 1992. pxxi.

about whether it belongs in the South East Asian region is mirrored by similar doubts from within the region. On the one hand, the geographic proximity and reality of the South East Asian region impinges forcefully upon the consciousness of successive Australian governments. The growing range of Australian interests, strategic, economic and social, within the South East Asian region necessitates a stronger role for Australia in the region. This is a point strongly reiterated by Prime Minister Keating, who states:

> "My focus is more narrowly on what happened in relation to the Asia Pacific, the geographic area of most immediate concern to Australia - where our economic and security interests are most intense and where we have the greatest opportunity to influence and shape the future.
>
> This must be the key foreign policy issue for any Australian Government: the degree to which Australia can influence for the better the region which will affect us most directly; how we can ensure that our voice is heard and that it is effective."[11]

While Keating was referring to the Asia Pacific, a broader region that encompassed East Asia, the South Pacific and both North and South America, it shall be demonstrated that the South East Asian region was the focus for many of Australia's diplomatic initiatives. It shall also be argued that the South East Asian region represented an opportunity through which Australia sought to engage the wider Asia-Pacific community.[12] On the other hand, there is an arguably justifiable perception among some South East Asian states that Australia is not, or at least hesitant about being identified as, a South East Asian state.[13] This perception limited Australia's capacity to assume a leadership role within the region and to influence developments

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[10] Ranjit Gill, ASEAN Towards The 21st Century: A Thirty-Year Review Of The Association Of Southeast Asian nations. p11.

[11] Paul Keating, 'Obsession: Australia And The Challenge Of Asia', speech made at the University Of New South Wales, Sydney, Australia on 12 June 1996.

[12] Paul Keating, Speech to the Foreign Correspondents Association, made in Sydney, Australia on 11 November 1994.

[13] 'More on Australia-Asia relationships - 6th March 1996 ' in Asia Pacific Management News Menu, http://www.apmforum.com/news/apmn18.htm.

within the South East Asian region. It is this tension between Australia's undeniable interests and the uncertainty over its status within the region that has shaped its role as a middle power in South East Asia.

Asserting Australian Influence In South East Asia

Australia has long demonstrated an interest in assuming a role of influence within the South East Asian region. Many of the colonial administrators in the early Australian settlements were British officers who had also served in the British colonies in Malaya and Burma. Early Australian governments, as dominions of the British Empire, also consistently defended British colonial interests within the South East Asian region.[14] Australia's interests in the contemporary South East Asian region have not ebbed with the end of colonialism. Australia's economic interests in the South East Asian region reflect the growing importance of the region to Australia in terms of trade and investment.[15] Australia's strategic interests in the South East Asian region are centred upon the perception that any threat to Australian security is most likely to emerge from, or come through the South East Asian region.[16] Therefore, Australia's interests in the South East Asia region may be reviewed in terms of these three factors, its historical role as a dominion of the British Empire, its strong and growing economic interests within the region and its strategic interests within the region.

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[14] H.R. Cowrie, Asia and Australia in World Affairs, Melbourne, Nelson, 1987. pp 226-276.
[15] East Asia Analytic Unit, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade and Austrade, Australia's Business Challenge: South-East Asia In The 1990s, Canberra, Commonwealth of Australia, 1992.

Australia's Historical Interest In The South East Asian Region

There have always been fears that the South East Asian region represented a potential threat to Australia, sparking concerns for Australian security that were directed not simply at the European rivals to the British Empire but at the 'Asiatic hordes' that might descend upon Australia for any number of reasons. However, prior to the Second World War, Australia's interest in South East Asia had been cursory. British interests influenced much of early Australian policy towards the South East Asian region. As Michael Ong pointed out:

> "Until the end of the 1930s, when an embryonic diplomatic service was established, Australia's relationship with Asian countries, many not independent of western tutelage at that time, were largely determined by its imperial link with the British Empire."[17]

It was South East Asia that brought home a sense of urgency about Australia's regional interests. The Second World War shattered Australia's faith in British power. The fall of Singapore and the bombing of Darwin reinforced Australia's fears about its vulnerability as a remote European outpost in a hostile geographic environment. This anxiety eventually resulted in a policy of 'forward defence', which argued that Australia's security is best served by committing its military forces to 'forward positions' in defence of its strategic interests in the South East Asian region. Thus, Australia committed itself to the Vietnam War (and to the Korean War) in an attempt to answer perceived and potential threats to its interests from the region.[18]

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[16] Paul Dibb, Review of Australia's Defence Capabilities: Report to the Minister for Defence, Canberra, Australian Government Publishing Service, 1986.

[17] Michael Ong, 'The Context of Australia's Involvement in Asia' in Background Paper 9 1996-97, Australia's Asian Connections: A Stocktake, Department of the Parliamentary Library, Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade Group.

Australia has played a direct role in South East Asia on several occasions. In the Second World War, Australians played a significant part in the defence (albeit unsuccessful) of Singapore. Subsequently, Australia served as a base from which the Allies recaptured South East Asia from the Japanese. After the Second World War, Australia continued to play a prominent role in South East Asia. Australians were involved in South East Asia during the Malayan Emergency when they helped to combat the threat of communist insurgency in the jungles of Malaya. In addition to an active military presence, Australia also contributed to the development of the South East Asian region, especially through the Colombo Plan, which "had a strong security objective, promoting economic development as a foil against the perceived threat of communism."[19] Australia also helped a newly independent Malaysian Federation resist the territorial ambitions of Sukarno's Indonesia in the episode referred to as *Konfrontasi.* These efforts from Australia have (arguably) directly affected the history of at least three South East Asian countries, Indonesia, Malaysia, and Singapore. And as mentioned earlier, Australia was involved in the Vietnam War and the unsuccessful attempt to prevent communist regimes from taking root in another two South East Asian countries, Cambodia and Laos.

Therefore, Australia has exhibited a strong interest in South East Asian affairs, both as a dominion of Great Britain and as an independent state.[20] In addition, Australia has also demonstrated its ability to play an important role, as a middle power, in its early relationship with the South East Asian region.[21] However, it shall be demonstrated that while Australia's interests within the South East Asian region

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[18] It was also an effort to defend Australian interests by committing the United States to the region. See Chapter 2.

[19] Michael Ong, 'The Context of Australia's Involvement in Asia' in Background Paper 9 1996-97, Australia's Asian Connections: A Stocktake.

continued to grow in strength, its capacity to assume a dominant leadership role and to exercise significant influence within the region has since diminished.

Australia's Economic Interests In The South East Asian Region

Australia's economic interests in the South East Asian region are considerable. In a 1992 report, it was argued that the South East Asian region would be increasingly important to Australia's economic interests and that:

> "No industrialised nation has more at stake in South-East Asia's economic development than Australia."[22]

Since the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade published that report, Australia's economic ties with South East Asian have grown significantly. From 7.9% in 1980, to 12.3% in 1991, to 15.2% in 1997, the ASEAN 6[23] accounted for an increasing share of Australian exports.[24] While the major markets (accounting for 41% of exports) for Australian goods and services remain in North East Asia region, the strategic significance of the South East Asian region to Australia's economic interests continued to be emphasised in its Foreign Policy. Russell Fynmore and Hal Hill predicted that:

> "For the foreseeable future, North-East Asia will be quantitatively larger in Australia's trade and investment patterns. But geography has conspired to define a unique and complex role for South-East Asia in Australia's economic, social and political future. And from

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[20] See also Peter Edwards, with Gregory Pemberton, Crisis and Commitments: The Politics And Diplomacy Of Australia's Involvement In Southeast Asian Conflicts 1948-1965, North Sydney, Allen & Unwin, 1992.

[21] See H.R. Cowrie, Asia and Australia in World Affairs. pp 226-276.

[22] East Asia Analytic Unit, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade and Austrade, Australia's Business Challenge: South-East Asia In The 1990s. pxxxviii.

[23] The ASEAN 6 refers to Brunei, Indonesia, Thailand, Malaysia, the Philippines, and Singapore. The inclusion of Laos, Myanmar, and Vietnam has since raised the figure to 9.

[24] East Asia Analytic Unit, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade and Austrade, Australia;s Business Challenge: South-East Asia In The 1990s. p107 & http:\\www.dfat.gov.au.

> a small base, our commercial relations with South-East Asia may well expand more rapidly than those with North-East Asia."[25]

Keating reiterates this view when he stated that:

> "Australia had a long history of engagement with Asia. ... [However], never before the 1990s had all our interests - political, economic, social and cultural - converged so intensely there."[26]

Australia saw an opportunity in the South East Asian region to position itself advantageously, especially relative to other Western and developed states, and has capitalised on its geographic proximity to this region to cultivate an image of itself as a useful platform for European investment in East Asia.[27]

The South East Asian region has become a major export market for Australian goods and services, especially the tourism and education industries. In 1993-94 exports to this group rose by 18.5 per cent to reach A$2.8 billion, above the trend rate of growth for the last decade (15.8 per cent).[28] Australia had a surplus of A$382 million with ASEAN in 1993-94. In particular, travel services (A$1.4 billion in 1993-94) have grown at 25 per cent a year over the last decade.[29] In 1995-96, total inbound tourists to Australia numbered 3.966 million. Asian tourists (including Japan) accounted for 2.017 million arrivals or nearly 51 per cent of the total.[30] Key markets in the South East Asian region (for 1996-97) included Singapore (222, 800), Indonesia (154, 500)

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[25] East Asia Analytic Unit, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade and Austrade, Australia's Business Challenge: South-East Asia In The 1990s. pxxxix.
[26] Paul Keating, 'Obsession: Australia And The Challenge Of Asia'.
[27] In the National Interest: Australia's Foreign and Trade Policy White Paper. p67.
[28] Tas Luttrell. 'Australia's Trade with Asia', in Background Paper 9 1996-97, Australia's Asian Connections: A Stocktake, Department of the Parliamentary Library, Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade Group.
[29] Tas Luttrell. 'Australia's Trade with Asia', in Background Paper 9 1996-97, Australia's Asian Connections: A Stocktake.
[30] John Kain, 'Asian Tourism in Context', in Background Paper 9 1996-97, Australia's Asian Connections: A Stocktake, Department of the Parliamentary Library, Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade Group.

& Malaysia (134, 400).[31] Given that the average daily expenditure for these three market groups is A$3,190, A$4,206 & A$3,258 respectively, tourism earnings from the South East Asian region would easily exceed A$1.8 billion.[32]

The total number of overseas students served by Australia education industry also increased dramatically from around 21,000 in 1988 to 140,000 in 1996.[33] Two South East Asian countries, Indonesia and Malaysia, represented two of Australia's top three markets for education, while a third South East Asian country, Singapore currently represents Australia's sixth largest market for exports.[34] Significantly, these countries all numbered among the leading recipients of Australian scholarships under the Colombo plan and subsequent aid scholarship programs, suggesting that there is an economic return for Australia's foreign aid in the South East Asian region.[35] Australia has become the market leader in some Asian markets for education and a number of Australian universities have developed prominent positions in export markets.[36] In 1996, it was estimated that overseas students contributed over $3 billion to the Australian economy. This represented an increase of nearly 50 per cent in just two years, making it the fifth largest export earner for Australia.

The South East Asian region is regarded as being a potentially important source of investment for Australia. Currently, Singapore is the ninth largest source of direct

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[31] 'Overseas Arrivals and Departures', Australia in Brief, Australia Bureau of Statistics (3401.0), 1998.
[32] 'International Visitor Survey, Bureau of Tourism Research', Australia in Brief, Australia Bureau of Statistics, 1998.
[33] The Allen Consulting Group Pty Ltd, The Australian International Education Foundation: Review of the Government-Industry Partnership, Consultancy Report To The Department Of Employment, Education Training And Youth Affairs March 1997. p1.
[34] Dr Kim Jackson, 'Education', in Background Paper 9 1996-97, Australia's Asian Connections: A Stocktake, Department of the Parliamentary Library, Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade Group. The Allen Consulting Group Pty Ltd, The Australian International Education Foundation: Review of the Government-Industry Partnership.
[35] The Allen Consulting Group Pty Ltd, The Australian International Education Foundation: Review of the Government-Industry Partnership. p1.

foreign investment (and sixth largest for portfolio and other investments).[37] Prior to the current economic crisis in Asia (1997-1998), there had also been a strong expectation of a growing commitment in terms of investment in Australia from the other South East Asian states.[38]

Australia has been persistent in its attempts to assume a more influential role within the South East Asian region. The premise is that Australia could ill afford to be 'left out' of any multilateral arrangement that might affect its interests within the region. Australia was the first 'extra-regional' actor to establish a dialogue relationship with ASEAN in 1974.[39] Australia also exhibited considerable interest in the proposed development of an ASEAN Free Trade Area (AFTA). The proposal for AFTA has been floated for many years[40] but progress has always been slowed by the reluctance of some ASEAN members to lift tariffs and restrictions and liberalise trade.[41] Thus, the objective of AFTA has been criticised by some as being more of a mirage than real.[42] Nevertheless, the possibility of establishing AFTA, however remote, could potentially have a profound impact on Australia's economic interests. Therefore,

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[36] The Allen Consulting Group Pty Ltd, The Australian International Education Foundation: Review of the Government-Industry Partnership. p1.
[37] Australian Bureau of Statistics, Balance of Payments and International Investment Position, Australia 1994-95 (5363.0): Table 53.
[38] East Asia Analytic Unit, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade and Austrade, Australia's Business Challenge: South-East Asia In The 1990s. pp122-126.
[39] Gareth Evans & Bruce Grant, Australia's Foreign Relations: In The World Of The 1990s, Carlton, Melbourne University Press, 1991. p181.
[40] 'AFTA, EAEC likely to top agenda of ASEAN Business', Business Times, Malaysia, 1 October 1993.
[41] Mari Pangestu, 'Comments: Why ASEAN Trade Cooperation Has Not Worked?', in ASEAN Economic Cooperation: A New Perspective: Papers And Proceedings Of The Twelfth Annual Conference Of The Federation Of ASEAN Economic Associations, Nusa Dua, Bali, Indonesia, September 3-5, 1987, Singapore, Chapman Publishers, 1988. pp148-149. & Mari Pangestu, Hadi Soesastro & Mubarig Ahmad, Intra-ASEAN Economic Co-operation: A New Perspective, Centre for Strategic and International Studies, Jarkarta, December 1991. pp40-51.
[42] Mari Pangestu, Hadi Soesastro & Mubarig Ahmad, Intra-ASEAN Economic Co-operation: A New Perspective. p60.

Australia's involvement in the development of AFTA or similar initiatives remains a priority of its foreign policy.[43]

Australia's interests in the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) forum is another indication of the importance that it places upon a strong role in the South East Asian region.[44] When Dr Mahathir, the Malaysian Prime Minister advocated an East Asian Economic Caucus (EAEC) that would have excluded Australia,[45] Australia responded quickly and vigorously supported the development of APEC to ensure that it would not be 'left out in the cold' in South East Asia. As Keating explains:

> "If I may divert for a moment, it was these quite deep issues about the future of the region, rather than any personal animosity, which lay behind my disagreements with the Malaysian Prime Minister Dr Mahathir over APEC and the EAEC. Dr Mahathir is a formidable leader who has transformed Malaysia in ways I greatly admire, but we had different visions of the region into the twenty first century. The driving force in his vision was a strong pan-Asian nationalism which asserted that the time had come after centuries of colonial rule for Asia to take control of its own future. Mine has been shaped by the conviction I set out earlier - that Australia's interests and the region's are best served by making the Asia Pacific the focus of our institution building efforts because the dangers - economic, social and strategic - of creating a divide between the two sides of the Pacific were overwhelmingly greater than the advantages of an East Asia-only approach.
>
> *And, of course, Australia's exclusion from significant regional bodies like that proposed was quite contrary to the Government's view of Australian interests.* [my emphasis]
>
> It was also contrary to our view of the region's interests. I am convinced that Australia's active engagement in the region - our energy, our creativity our economic resources - are an asset for the region as a whole."[46]

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[43] In the National Interest: Australia's Foreign and Trade Policy White Paper. p45.
[44] Frank Frost, 'APEC's Kuala Lumpur Meetings, 1998: Major Outcomes and Australia's Interests', Current Issues Brief 5 1998-99, Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade Group, Commonwealth Parliamentary Library, Canberra, 8 December 1998.
[45] Bilveer Singh, 'The Fourth ASEAN Summit – A New Milestone In Political Will', in ASEAN And The European Community In The 1990s, (eds. Lee Lai To & Arnold Wehmhoerner, Singapore, Institute Of International Affairs, 1993. pp4 & 6.
[46] Paul Keating, 'Obsession: Australia And The Challenge Of Asia'.

Thus, Australia lobbied strongly for APEC, a forum that would ensure that Australia is included in a multilateral institutional arrangement that might potentially play a decisive role in economic affairs for the Asia Pacific region.

The call for Pacific Rim Economic Cooperation has been sounded before and a pipe dream for years. However, Australia managed to turn this dream into a reality and trump Malaysia's EAEC with Hawke's proposed Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) forum. The EAEC has since died stillborn whereas APEC has assumed increasing significance within the region. Australia's success in promoting APEC could simply have been due to the fact that its timing was propitious. On the other hand, it could also have been a reflection of Australia's capacity, as a middle power, to initiate regional multilateral institutional arrangements more successfully than smaller powers. Regardless of the reasons for its success,[47] Australia's role in APEC clearly demonstrated its determination not to be excluded from the South East Asian region and its ability to play a significant role as a middle power.

Australia's Strategic Interests In South East Asian Region

Since the Second World War, the South East Asian region has been regarded as paramount to Australian strategic interests. The Australian Joint Committee on Foreign Affairs and Defence stated that:

[47] The factors affecting Australia's capacity to successfully influence regional developments will be discussed later in this chapter.

> "... no other part of the world... promises to be of more consistent importance to Australia than the region of East and Southeast Asia."[48]

The Dibb Report and the Department of Defence Report both concluded that any threat to the Australian continent would most likely come from or through the region North and North West of Australia.[49] Even though this particular assessment of the potential threats to Australian security has been omitted from subsequent strategic assessments like the Defence White Paper 1994,[50] these security concerns about the South East Asian region remained valid and they represent significant issues that Australian foreign policy must address.

Historically, Australia has addressed these concerns with a policy of 'forward defence'. Or as Menzies argued in response to the potential threat that communism from the South East Asian region posed to Australia during the 1960s:

> "... it is unbelievable that any responsible Australian should fail to see that if the battle against Communism is to be an effective one it must be as forward of Australia as possible. ... If Malaya is vital to our defence, more vital, properly understood, than some point on the Australian coast, then we must make Malayan defence in a real sense our business."[51]

Therefore, Australian forces were committed to the South East Asian region in response to the Malayan Emergency, *Konfrontasi*, FPDA commitments, and the

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[48] Joint Committee on Foreign Affairs and Defence, Australia and ASEAN: Challenges and Opportunities, px.

[49] Paul Dibb, Review of Australia's Defence Capabilities: Report to the Minister for Defence. Department of Defence, The Defence of Australia, 1987.

[50] See Defending Australia: Defence White Paper 1994, Canberra, Australian Government Publishing Service, 1994. The omission was probably made out of deference to the feelings of Indonesia, which is situated to the North and Northwest of Australia. Indonesia had intimated that it was offended by the inference that it was considered a threat in the earlier White Papers released by the Australian Department of Defence.

[51] Announcement of further military commitment to ANZAM (British, New Zealand and Australian agreement for co-operation in suppressing insurgency movement in Malaya) April 1955. Neville Meaney, Australia and the World: A Documentary History From The 1870s to the 1970s, Longman Cheshire, Melbourne, 1985. p329.

Vietnam War.[52] Underlying these deployments was also the logic, albeit inferred, that the South East Asian 'troubles' should be 'contained' within that region and away from Australian shores.

Australian foreign policy has undergone a paradigm shift in more recent times, moving away from a policy of 'containment' to a policy of 'engagement'. Australian foreign policy became oriented towards the premise that, as opposed to keeping 'trouble' away from Australia shores, it was better to keep it out of the South East Asian region altogether. Or as Gary Brown observed:

> "Underlying this policy is the assumption that if Australia's region is secure in military-strategic terms, then so is Australia. Therefore it is considered important that Australia make, and be seen to be making, a positive contribution to regional security via engagement."[53]

Australia's change in mindset could be attributed to a variety of reasons. The development and growing military capabilities of the South East Asian states might have led to the assessment that a policy of containment would be difficult, if not impossible. Australia's economic interests in the South East Asian region also meant that a policy of containment, even if successful, would still prove to be inadequate in terms of defending its interests. In other words, political instability in the South East Asian region would inevitably have an adverse effect on Australia's economic interests, even if it were possible to 'contain' them within that region. Thus, a policy of active engagement with the South East Asian region, in defence of Australia's strategic interests, has been deemed necessary.[54]

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[52] Gary Brown, 'Defence', in Background Paper 9 1996-97, Australia's Asian Connections: A Stocktake.
[53] Gary Brown, 'Defence', in Background Paper 9 1996-97, Australia's Asian Connections: A Stocktake.
[54] Gareth Evans & Bruce Grant, Australia's Foreign Relations: In The World Of The 1990s. pp181-184.

Australia demonstrated its interest in the South East Asian region by maintaining extensive security ties with various states in that region. Australia is a member of the Five Power Defence Arrangements (FPDA), the only multilateral defence pact that is operational in South East Asia.[55] Australia had maintained a physical military presence in the region for many years.[56] Under the FPDA, Australian had made regular but limited deployments of military units to South East Asia. Thus:

> "RAAF Orion Long Range Maritime Patrol Aircraft fly regularly from the Butterworth base in Malaysia to conduct maritime surveillance operations. F/A-18 aircraft deploy on a regular basis for exercises. The Army has a company at Butterworth on a three month rotation and RAAF has a support unit at Butterworth for the Orions."[57]

Australia's role as a 'middle' power that maintained a 'balance' within its geo-political region is re-enacted to some extent within the South East Asian region. In *Konfrontasi* with Indonesia, Australia clearly played an important role in maintaining the 'balance of power' between the smaller states in the region (including Malaysia, Singapore, New Zealand and Australia itself) and the South East Asian giant, Indonesia. Significantly, even within FPDA itself, Australia continues to play an important role as a middle power and a trusted 'middleman'. Gary Brown noted:

> "The FPDA runs the Integrated Air Defence System (IADS) which supports the air defence of Singapore and Malaysia. An Australian commands the IADS structure, if only because neither Singapore nor Malaysia would necessarily wish the other to hold this position."[58]

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[55] Although the viability of the FPDA is currently strained following Malaysia's withdrawal from joint military exercises in 1998 and its decision to review its involvement in such exercises. Straits Times, Singapore, 29 October 1998.

[56] Joint Committee on Foreign Affairs and Defence, Australia and ASEAN: Challenges and Opportunities, Canberra, Australia Government Publishing Service, 1984. p60.

[57] Gary Brown, 'Defence', in Background Paper 9 1996-97, Australia's Asian Connections: A Stocktake, Department of the Parliamentary Library, Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade Group.

Australia has conducted small-scale exercises with Brunei and Thailand.[59] Australia signed a security arrangement with Indonesia in 1996, making it the only country apart from the United States to be involved in a bilateral security arrangement with a South East Asian nation.[60]

Australia's strategic interests in South East Asia have always been significant. However, since the early 1990s, concerns about the changing geo-political environment brought about by the end of the Cold War and the growing power of the South East Asian states have guide Australia's outlook towards the region. Gareth Evans, the former Australian Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade, observed that:

> "With growing prosperity, overall stability and regional cooperation, several countries have begun to look more broadly at their notions of security, especially the importance of maritime areas. What is important about the changes of force structure that flow from this, such as Indonesia's improvement of its naval capabilities, is that they are appropriate and expected, and no more than what Australia has put in place, adjusting capabilities to circumstances."[61]

The increased military capabilities, especially in terms of naval power, of the South East Asian states have been a matter of significance to Australian strategic planners, even though such capabilities have, thus far, been accompanied by better understanding and a more cordial relationship between Australia and these states. The growing military capabilities of the South East Asian states also coincided with nagging doubts about the continuing commitment of the United States to the South East Asian region. Thus, in his assessment of the region, Ross Baggage states that:

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[58] Gary Brown, 'Defence', in Background Paper 9 1996-97, Australia's Asian Connections: A Stocktake.
[59] Rob Willis, 'The Maritime Strategic Security Setting: An Operational Perspective', in Australia's Maritime Bridge Into Asia, Sam Bateman & Dick Sherwood (eds.), St Leonards, Allen & Unwin, 1995. p99.
[60] Michael Ong, 'The Context of Australia's Involvement in Asia'.
[61] Gareth Evans, 'Australia's Regional Security Environment', Address to the Conference on Strategic Studies in a Changing World, Australian National University, 31 July 1991, p6.

> "There are now widespread doubts throughout Asia about the preparedness of the Clinton and subsequent administrations to commit forces to this region in many circumstances of future tension or conflict. Special concerns relate to the reticence of the United States to commit forces for peacekeeping operations in Cambodia and to support regional countries in the event of increased tensions in the South China Sea. In consequence, many of the regional countries are reassessing the assumptions they have made in the past about the United States."[62]

These geo-political changes have affected Australia's perceptions of its strategic interests within the South East Asian region.

Two aspects of the South East Asian strategic environment pertaining to maritime-related issues have been especially significant to Australia. These include the security of sea-lanes of communication and the issue of overlapping jurisdictional claims to the Spratly Islands within the South East Asian region.

Australia's interests in maritime and security related issues in the South East Asia region are based, to a large extent, on its considerable economic interests in East Asia. Australia's most important markets (seven out of ten for exports and five of ten for imports) are in East Asia.[63] These markets, as well as Australia's major markets in Europe, relied on the safe flow of sea-borne trade that passed through South East Asian waters.[64] Although shipping could be re-routed in the event of a disruption to traffic arising from political or military conflict in the South East Asian region, this

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[62] Ross Babbage, 'The Post-Cold War Maritime Strategic Environment In The Western Pacific', in Operational And Technological Developments In Maritime Warfare: Implications For The Western Pacific, Dick Sherwood (ed.), Canberra Papers on Strategy and Defence, no. 105, Canberra, Strategic and Defence Studies Centre, 1995. p10.

[63] Merchandise exports fob, recorded trade basis, compiled from ABS unpublished data. http://www.dfat.gov.au/.

[64] Leonard Payne, 'Ships & Shipping', in Australia's Maritime Bridge Into Asia, Sam Bateman & Dick Sherwood (eds.), St Leonards, Allen & Unwin, 1995. pp123-130. See also Ross Robinson, 'The Changing Patterns of Commercial Shipping and Port Concentration in Asia', Ross Babbage & Sam Bateman (eds), Maritime Change: Issues for Asia, Sydney, Allen & Unwin, 1993.

option would incur considerable costs.[65] Thus, the safety and freedom of navigation through the transit straits and archipelagic waters of the South East Asian region would be a major concern to Australia.[66] Similarly, Australia is concerned about the dispute over the overlapping jurisdictional claims in the Spratly Islands in the South East Asian region. The Spratly Islands dispute affected regional stability, economic development, the maritime environment, as well as the safety and freedom of important sea lanes of communication in South East Asia, all of which might have a negative impact on Australian strategic interests, if conflict were to occur.

Australia has attempted to defend its strategic interests and address the above concerns by seeking to play an influential role in establishing regional frameworks for security that are based on multilateral institutional arrangements. Australia's policy of engagement with its South East Asian neighbours has been directed at creating a strategic environment in South East Asia that would be amenable to its best interests.[67] This included initiatives for regional multilateral institutional arrangements that were deemed vital towards the achievement of this objective.[68]

Australia exploited its capabilities as a middle power to promote institutional mechanisms for dialogue and other functional objectives within the South East Asian region. Influential strategic planners like Professor Paul Dibb and Commodore Sam Bateman promoted the view that maritime confidence and security building measures for the region are essential. In a paper to a workshop on "Naval Confidence and Security Building Regimes for the Asia Pacific Region' in Kuala Lumpur, Dibb and

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[65] Defending Australia: Defence White Paper 1994. pp44-45.
[66] R.J. Hawke, 'Australia's Security in Asia', An Address by the Prime Minister in The Asia Lecture, Asia-Australian Institute, University of New South Wales, Sydney, 24 May 1991. p11.
[67] Andrew Mack, 'Strategic Security Issues' in Australia's Maritime Bridge Into Asia, Sam Bateman & Dick Sherwood (eds.), St Leonards, Allen & Unwin, 1995. pp81-94.

Bateman proposed the development of regional institutional arrangements for this purpose.[69] In particular, the establishment of regional arrangements for maritime surveillance and safety, as well as regimes for the avoidance of incidents at sea, that would enhance the security of the region (and by inference the security of Australia) have been strongly advocated.[70] There are other indications of Australia's efforts to influence the establishment of security forums in the South East Asian region. These include the Australian proposal for a Conference for Security and Cooperation in Asia (modelled on the regional arrangement for Europe) and its support for enhancement of the ASEAN Regional Forum, as well as tentative efforts to introduce discussion of security issues within the ASEAN forum itself. Australia has also initiated numerous 'track-two' quasi-official discussion forums, both to keep significant security issues on the agenda of South East Asian states and 'to foster a habit of consultation and dialogue'. These endeavours clearly demonstrated Australia's interests in the South East Asian region and its determination to influence developments there.

In short, Australia's interests within the South East Asian region have grown in significance. These interests were based on Australia's growing economic linkages with the entire East Asian region, as well as on the perception that any significant threat to the Australian continent would most likely come from or through the South East Asian region.

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[68] Tony Kevin, 'Major Power Influences On The Southeast Asian Region: An Australian View', in Strange Neighbour: The Australia-Indonesia Relationship, Desmond Ball & Helen Wilson, North Sydney, Allen & Unwin, 1991.

[69] Desmond Ball & W.S.G. Bateman, 'An Australian Perspective on Maritime CSBMs in the Asia-Pacific Region' organised by the Peace Research Centre, Australian National University and the Institute of Strategic and International Studies (ISIS) Malaysia, Kuala Lumpur, 8-10 July 1991.

[70] Desmond Ball & Russ Swinnerton, 'A Regional Regime For Maritime Surveillance, Safety and Information Exchange', Paper presented at Australia's Maritime Bridge Into Asia conference, 17-19 November 1993, held in Canberra, 1993.

Australian Influence (or lack of) In The South East Asian Region

The discussion that follows addresses the manner in which Australia has sought to defend its interests in the South East Asian region. It argues that while Australia has the ambition to assume a role of significant influence in South East Asia, its capacity to do so is moderated by its limitations as a middle power. In the South East Asian region, Australia does not enjoy the asymmetries of power that has characterised its relationship with the Pacific Island states. Therefore, in order to defend its interests effectively in the South East Asian region, Australia has sought to assume a role of influence through regional institutional arrangements. However, the fact that Australia has yet to be fully accepted as a part of the South East Asian region, coupled with the circumscribed ambit of regional institutional arrangements within South East Asia (as opposed to the situation in the Antarctic region) has seen limited scope for *middlepowermanship* from Australia.

The literature suggests that middle powers could be perceived as regional great powers, with general interests in their region matched with the capacity to defend those interests.[71] This would infer that the extent to which a middle power like Australia is able to influence regional arrangements in contemporary South East Asia would be determined by its military and economic power, relative to that of the South East Asian states. More recent studies argued that *middlepowermanship* represents another significant avenue through which middle powers assume a role of influence, where *middlepowermanship* refers to the capacity of middle powers to establish, engage in and exploit multilateral institutional arrangements to their

[71] See Chapter 2, Structuralist Perspectives Of Middle Powers.

advantage.[72] However, an investigation of Australia's role in the South East Asian region suggests that geographic vagaries can affect the extent to which a middle power might assume an influential regional role and its capacity to manifest significant influence.

Middle Power And Influence In South East Asia

As discussed earlier, Australia had historically played a significant role in the South East Asian region. As a British dominion, Australia achieved industrialisation and the status of a developed nation much earlier than any other state in the South East Asian region. Therefore, Australia possessed military capabilities that far exceeded those possessed by the states of an undeveloped and newly independent South East Asian region in the years immediately following the Second World War. Australia had a well-trained, well-armed, and experienced military with the proven capacity to project itself abroad in defence of its interests. In contrast, the military forces of South East Asia did not have the same level of capabilities and they did not possess a professional military with experience beyond combating civil insurgency. Thus, for many years Australia was the dominant power, in military terms, within the South East Asian region. In 1947, Australian strategic planners were able to state with confidence that:

> "In the foreseeable future, which can be regarded as the period which planing based on present knowledge must take into account, Australia's physical security is not likely to be seriously endangered as a result of any hostile or unfriendly action in her own theatre. No country in ... South East Asia ... possesses the capacity, either in point of organisation or equipment, to conduct any operations against her of any significance. There is no danger at present discernible of any of them developing a military potential

[72] See Chapter 2, Process Oriented Perspectives Of Middle Powers.

> which would enable them, either together or singly, successfully to challenge the Commonwealth."[73]

As a middle power, Australia could rely upon its superior power to assume a role of influence and importance in the South East Asian region. For a period, Australia was able to resist the spread of communism there, as well as to aid in the development of many South East Asian states.

Australia's contemporary position with respect to South East Asia is somewhat different. Decades of education, development and independence in the South East Asian region have reduced the disparity between Australia and its South East Asian neighbours substantially. Many of the region's professional armed forces currently surpass Australia's military forces in quantitative terms, even if they continue to lag behind in qualitative measures.[74] The rapid economic growth in the region has also meant a corresponding increase in defence spending, resulting in much better training and the acquisition of modern military hardware.[75] Therefore, the enormous military superiority that Australia had previously possessed has been greatly eroded and is likely to continue to diminish. Professor Paul Dibb observed that:

> "We have traditionally accepted the notion that Australia's capacity to absorb and operate equipment at higher technology levels than regional states provides us with a sufficiently advantageous margin for our numerical deficiencies. Given the rapid diffusion of modern high-technology weapons systems, and their accurate application in

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[73] Joint Intelligence Committee Appreciation 1/47, Melbourne 27 March 1947, Appreciation of Certain Aspects of the Strategic Position of Australia, cited in Documents on Australian Foreign Policy 1937-49, Volume XII: 1947, W.J. Hudson & Wendy Way (eds.), Canberra, Australian Government Publishing Service, 1995. pp277-278.

[74] Ross Babbage, 'The Post-Cold War Maritime Strategic Enviroment In The Western Pacific', in Operational And Technological Developments In Maritime Warfare: Implications For The Western Pacific, Dick Sherwood (ed.), Canberra, Strategic and Defence Studies Centre, Australian National University, 1994. pp5-42.

[75] J.N. Mak, ASEAN Defence Orientation 1975-1992: The Dynamics Of Modernisation And Structural Change, Canberra Papers On Strategy And Defence No. 103, Canberra, Strategic And Defence Studies Centre, Australian National University, 1994.

> combat, this proposition will increasingly need sceptical examination."[76]

Both Indonesia and Vietnam are far more populous than Australia and they possess armed forces that are much larger numerically. While their military forces are not be as well equipped or as well trained as the Australian forces, they are certainly significant by regional standards. They may also, with some justification, lay claim to experience in war and they command sufficient resources to train and equip (at least) a significant portion of their forces to a high level of capability.

Australia's traditional advantage, in terms of economic influence, in the South East Asian region has also been reduced. Australia had used, and continues to use, economic power as a medium of influence in defence of its interests in the South East Asian region. Australia's foreign aid, trade and investment policies have long been instruments of its foreign policy. Australian development assistance through the Colombo Plan, the Australian International Development Aid Bureau, and other programs enabled it to defend its interests within South East Asia. These initiatives have also bought a great deal of good will in the region and some scholars have noted the efficacy of this strategy.[77]

> "Casey found from visiting most countries of SE Asia that Australia was in a good repute in all the free countries there as a friendly and interested neighbour, and the fact that was appreciated that their fate was joined with that of Australia. He found that they tended to look to Australia for advice more than to some of the great powers."[78]

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[76] Paul Dibb, 'World Political and Strategic Trends', in Australia's External Relations In The 1980s: The Interaction of Economic, Political and Strategic Factors, Paul Dibb (ed.), Canberra, Croom Helm, 1983. p41.

[77] I.M. Cumpston, History of Australian Foreign Policy 1901-1991, Volume Two, Canberra, 195. p283.

[78] I.M. Cumpston, History of Australian Foreign Policy 1901-1991, Volume Two, p283.

However, rapid economic growth in the South East Asian region has reduced the dependence of some South East Asian states on Australian economic assistance.[79] Australia's gross national product was significantly greater than the combined total for the ASEAN states prior to the 1990s.[80] In 1989, Australia accounted about 6.3% of regional (East Asian) GDP (US$297.486 billion) while the South East Asian states only accounted for 5.8% (US$273.876 billion).[81] In 1995, the situation had changed.

Country	1993 (GNP)	1995 (GNP)
Australia	US$262.8 billion	US$310.8 billion
ASEAN	US$366.8 billion	US$423.5 billion

Source: Report by the U.S. Department of State, submitted to the Senate Committee on Foreign Affairs, and the House Committees on Foreign Affairs, and Ways and Means, May 1996.[82]

It is obvious that it would take some of the ASEAN nations decades, if not longer, to catch up with Australia in terms of GNP and other aspects of development. Nevertheless, the rapid economic growth that has been achieved is significant as it increased their capacity to pursue a greater range of policy options.[83] Moreover, notwithstanding the current economic crisis in South East Asia, the development of the South East Asian states is likely to continue.

The economic development of the South East Asian states means greater opportunities for capacity building. It also means that the South East Asian states would be better able to resist the use of economic leverage for influence against them, especially by a middle power like Australia. Indeed, the reverse would be true

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[79] Joint Committee on Foreign Affairs and Defence, Australia and ASEAN: Challenges and Opportunities. pxii.

[80] Report by the U.S. Department of State, submitted to the Senate Committee on Foreign Affairs, and the House Committees on Foreign Affairs, and Ways and Means, May 1996.

[81] Gareth Evans & Bruce Grant, Australia's Foreign Relations: In The World Of The 1990s. p341.

[82] The figures refer to the ASEAN 6 (and excludes Vietnam, Laos and Myanmar).

[83] B.A. Hamzah, 'A Survey Of Economic Opportunities And An Overview Of The Geo-Strategic Environment In The Maritime Sector Of Southeast Asia', Paper presented at Australia's Maritime Bridge Into Asia conference, 17-19 November 1993, held in Canberra, 1993. p3.

and Australia has become more susceptible to pressure from the South East Asian states. Collectively, the South East Asian states have become Australia's most important trading partners after Japan and United States. While the South East Asian states should not be regarded as a monolithic body, ASEAN does have a record of being able to respond to political challenges as a collective and had successfully put pressure on Australia in the past. For example, in 1971 the ASEAN states were able to able to successfully pressure Australia into abandoning a scheme to protect its national carrier, Qantas, by excluding other airlines from the 'Kangeroo route' between Australia and Britain.[84]

Australia remains the wealthiest state (in absolute terms) in the South East Asian region and continues to be backed by a well-trained and well-equipped military with considerable experience. However, the balance of power in the South East Asian region is now such that it is questionable if Australia can continue to lay claim to being a regional great power, much less play a role as such.

In the years since de-colonialisation, the South East Asia states have become much more influential in international affairs and are much stronger militarily. In particular, Indonesia has demonstrated its aspirations to the leadership of the global non-aligned movement.[85] Malaysia has also exhibited similar ambitions with respect to the Third World, especially during the stewardship of its outspoken Prime

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[84] 'Multilateral Agreement on Commercial Rights Of Non-Scheduled Services Among ASEAN, Manila, 13 March 1971,' in ASEAN Document Series, 1967-1985, ASEAN Secretariat, Jarkarta, 1985. p191. See also, Ow Chin Hock & Lim Chong Yah, The Development Of ASEAN: A Perspective On Relations With Australia, ASEAN-Australia Joint Project, Kuala Lumpur, ASEAN-Australia Economic Papers No. 3, 1984. p22.

[85] Dwight King, 'Indonesia's Foreign Policy', in The Political Economy Of Foreign Policy In Southeast Asia, David Wurfel & Bruce Burton (eds.), New York, St Martin's Press, 1990. pp97-98.

Minister, Dr Mahathir, on issues such as applying the principle of common heritage to Antarctica or applying controls on hedge-fund managers.[86]

In light of the growing parity in power between Australia and its South East Asia neighbours, as well as the growing ambitions of the latter, Australia would find it difficult to play the part of a regional hegemonic power in contemporary South East Asia. And to reprise the leadership role it plays in the South West Pacific region.

Comparative Data On Australia and the South East Asian States

Countries	GNP (US $ million)	Population	GNP per capita (US $)	Armed Forces	Military Expenditure (% of GNP)
Australia	310,050	18,025,000	17,510	56,100	2.4%
SEA Total	476,554	482,877,000	4,193	1,795,400	3.27%
Brunei	4,001	291,000	14,530	4,900	8.4%
Cambodia	1,580	9,610,000	170	88,500	N.A.
Indonesia	136,620	195,283,000	730	276,000	1.5%
Laos	1,308	4,882,000	290	37,000	7.9%
Malaysia	60,141	19,948,000	3,160	114,500	3.9%
Myanmar	30,707	46,527,000	700	286,000	3.8%
Philippines	54,593	70,011,000	830	106,500	2.2%
Singapore	55,372	2,989,000	19,310	54,000	4.8%
Thailand	120,235	58,791,000	2,040	256,000	2.9%
Vietnam	11,997	74,545,000	170	572,000	5.7%

Source: Britannica Encyclopaedia CD ROM 1997.

If there is a South East Asian regional great power, then it is arguably Indonesia, and not Australia that has better claim to the title. On the strength of its population, available resources and potential capabilities, Indonesia might, arguably, be considered a regional great power within South East Asia. However, since Sukarno's ambitions on Malaysia and Singapore have been thwarted, by a coalition of powers

[86] Statement by Dato' Seri Dr Mahathir Bin Mohamad on Antarctica at the 37th Session of the United Nations General Assembly in New York on 29th September 1982. Jennifer Hewett, 'Not on the

that included Australia, Indonesia has generally assumed a role that is defined by regional consensus rather than hegemonic leadership. Indeed, since ex-President Suharto took office in 1965, Indonesia has habitually refrained from acts of assertive influence within the region to forestall any impression of dominance.[87] Thus, overt attempts by any power in South East Asia to satisfy ambitions of regional hegemony have been absent for decades. Indeed, given the fact that most of the South East Asian states tend to be fairly evenly matched as powers, any state with ambitions to exercise dominance over the South East Asian region and assume the role of a regional great power is likely to meet with formidable resistance.

Middlepowermanship In South East Asia

Australia's capacity to translate its participation in regional multilateral institutional arrangements into effective influence has been observed in the South Pacific and the Antarctic region. In contrast, Australia's pursuit of *middlepowermanship* in the South East Asian region has been impeded by several factors. These include the scarcity of formal multilateral institutional arrangements within the region, as well as the limited scope of the arrangements that do exist. In addition, Australia's ambivalence about its identity as a South East Asian nation also undermines its influence in regional multilateral institutions. Thus, Australia's strategy of *middlepowermanship* has been less effective in South East Asia, relative to its successes elsewhere.

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agenda: Mahathir's attack on free market "misery" in Sydney Morning Herald, 23 July 1998.

[87] J. Soedjati Djiwandono, 'The Role of Major Powers and the Role of Indonesia as a Middle Power in Southwest Pacific', in The Role of Middle Powers In The Pacific: Indonesia-Canada Relations Towards The Year 2000, Jakarta, Centre For Strategic And International Studies, 1985. pp17-20. The notable exception was of course Indonesia's annexation of East Timor in 1975, but there were suggestions that even then, Indonesia had 'consulted' prior to its military action.

In contrast to the South West Pacific and Antarctic regions where Australia's strategy of *middlepowermanship* is premised on a highly visible leadership role, Australian has adopted a more discreet and less direct role in championing multilateral institutional arrangements within the South East Asian region. Australia maintained strong and cordial bilateral relationships with various South East Asian nations. In particular, Australia's close ties with Indonesia and Singapore provided it with the opportunity to persuade and influence regional developments in South East Asia. However, Australia's bilateral relations with the South East Asian states tended to fluctuate. In spite of a generally cordial government to government relationship, Australia's ties with Indonesia have often been strained by a variety of issues ranging from the deaths of 5 Australian reporters during Indonesia's invasion of East Timor, to a *Sydney Morning Herald* article on ex-President Suharto.[88]

Australia's relationship with Malaysia has been even more tumultuous, with points of conflict ranging from television programmes deemed offensive by Malaysia to ex-Prime Minister Keating's now infamous label of Dr Mahathir as a 'recalcitrant'.[89] Therefore, while important, bilateral approaches have been considered inadequate in South East Asia.[90]

Bilateral ties could not furnish the 'ballast' that a viable multilateral institutional arrangement would provide. This has been demonstrated by the Antarctic Treaty System, which provided a forum for cooperation between Argentina and the United Kingdom, even though bilateral relations between them were marked by conflict

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[88] See Desmond Ball & Helen Wilson (eds.), Strange Neighbours: The Australia-Indonesia Relationship, Allen & Unwin, Sydney, 1991.
[89] Peter Searle, 'Recalcitrant or Realpolitik? The Politics of Culture in Australia's Relations with Malaysia', in Pathways to Asia, The Politics of Engagement, Richard Robison (ed.), St Leonard's, Allen & Unwin, 1996.
[90] In the National Interest: Australia's Foreign and Trade Policy White Paper. p47.

during the Falklands War.[91] Similarly, formal multilateral institutional arrangements provided Australia with a platform for influence and consultation that was independent of its unpredictable bilateral relations with the states within the South East Asian region. Nossal also argues that:

> "Middle power diplomacy is guided by a belief that given the degree of contemporary interdependence, strictly bilateral dealings are a less effective, and often entirely ineffective, means of resolving international disputes. Moreover, bilateral arrangements do not promote global norms as effectively as those arrived at through multilateral negotiations."[92]

Australia's efforts in the South East Asian region have been guided by its interests in establishing a regional environment that is more amenable to its interests and where multilateral institutional arrangements play a more prominent role. Thus, Australia's primary role in the South East Asian region might be described as that of a facilitator for confidence building measures and 'track two diplomacy'.[93]

In the South East Asian region, ASEAN has emerged as the pre-eminent regional multilateral institutional arrangement.[94] ASEAN's primary role has been to institutionalise a process of dialogue and consultation within the South East Asian region. Thus, ASEAN serves to harmonise regional views on issues through its process of consensus building, and thereby increase the capacity of the region for effective advocacy in global forums on international issues. However, ASEAN is limited by the fact that its serves mainly as a consultative forum and a confidence building measure, and has in practice tended to avoid a regulatory or functional role

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[91] Peter Beck, The International Politics Of Antarctica, London, Croom Helm, 1986. pp83-84

[92] Kim Richard Nossal, 'Middle Power Diplomacy in the Changing Asia-Pacific Order: Australia and Canada Compared', in Charting the Post-Cold War Order, Richard Leaver & James L. Richardson (eds.), Boulder, Westview Press, 1993. p215.

[93] J.N. Mak, Defending Australia: Rhetoric or Regional Engagement? p7. For a discussion on the role on the utility of confidence building measures, see Andrew Mack, 'Confidence and Security Building Measures and Military Security', Disarmament: A Periodic Review by the United Nations, vol XIII, No. 3, 1990. pp142-156.

in economic or security issues.[95] Therefore, unlike the South Pacific region where multilateral institutional arrangements are developed to overcome the individual limitations of the Pacific Island states, or the Antarctic region where the Antarctic Treaty System is the de facto regulatory authority, South East Asian regional institutional arrangements have played a more limited role.

The relative scarcity of regional arrangements dedicated to functional or regulatory objectives in the South East Asian region might be attributed to several factors. One significant factor is the lingering suspicion that the South East Asian states still feel towards one another. Notwithstanding the talk of unity in ASEAN, member states clearly regard each other as economic and political rivals.[96] There are also differences among ASEAN members on regional priorities, appropriate economic policies and security issues.[97] Therefore, Neorealist considerations, based on suspicion and fear of potential rivals, appear to have inhibited the expansion of regional arrangements within South East Asia.[98] This meant that there are very few formal multilateral institutional arrangements in the South East Asian region within which Australia could assume a role of influence through *middlepowermanship*, either as a member or by providing technical or legal expertise.

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[94] Alison Broinowski (ed.), Understanding ASEAN, London, MacMillan, 1982.
[95] Mohammad Kamlin, The Meaning Of Integration In The ASEAN Region, Working Paper No. 8, Faculty Of Arts & Social Sciences, Universiti Brunei Darusalam, 1991.
[96] Hans H. Indorf, 'Political Relations Within ASEAN', in The ASEAN Reader, compiled by K.S. Sandhu, Sharon Siddique, Chandran Jeshurun, Ananda Rajah, Joseph L.H. Tan, Pushpa Thambipillai, Singapore, Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 1992. pp87-94.
[97] Hans H. Indorf, 'Political Relations Within ASEAN'. pp87-94.
[98] For a detailed discussion of Neorealist concerns with relative gains, see Robert Powell, 'Absolute and Relative Gains' in Neorealism and Neoliberalism: The Contemporary Debate, David A. Baldwin (ed.), New York, Columbia University Press, 1993. pp209-233. & Micheal Mastanduno, 'Do Relative Gains Matter? America's Response To Japanese Industrial Policy', in Neorealism and Neoliberalism: The Contemporary Debate, David A. Baldwin (ed.), New York, Columbia University Press, 1993. pp250-264. For a brief discussion of intra-ASEAN suspicions of member states towards one another, see Hans H. Indorf, 'Political Relations Within ASEAN'.

Australia's role as a middle power in the South East Asian region is also limited by the fact that it is yet to be acknowledged as a part of the region.[99] Therefore, any advocacy on the part of Australia could be and has been deemed the 'meddling' of an 'outsider'.[100] In contrast, Australia's effectiveness in the South West Pacific and the Antarctic can be attributed (in part) to the fact that it is seen to be acting in the capacity of a 'regional actor' within those regions. Australia's effectiveness in South East Asia has also been limited by the fact that it is not actually a member of ASEAN. While Australia has been granted observer and dialogue partner status in ASEAN, the fact that it is not a member meant that it could be excluded from regional forums like the proposed EAEC or the ASEAN-EC dialogue[101], both of which can have strong bearing on Australia's interests.[102] Australia's own ambivalence about its 'Asian identity' has not helped. Australians have mused upon their identity as a part of the South East Asian region for many years.[103] Although the importance of the South East Asian region to Australian interests appears undeniable, there are lingering fears that Australia's cultural identity might lose its distinctive European character or that its democratic political institutions might be at risk from association with Asia. Consequently, there has been a reluctance to embrace and engage the region by many Australians. Some South East Asian states also resent Australia and that has made it difficult for the latter to assume a more prominent role in South East Asian affairs. For example,

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[99] Meg Gurry, 'Identifying Australia's 'Region': From Evatt to Evans', in Australian Journal of International Affairs, Vol. 49, No. 1, May 1995. p30.

[100] Peter Searle, 'Recalcitrant or Realpolitik? The Politics of Culture in Australia's Relations with Malaysia'. p59.

[101] Also referred to as ASEM or the Asia-Europe Meeting.

[102] Ramesh Thakur, 'Australia's Regional Engagement', in Contemporary Southeast Asia, Volume 20, Number 1, Singapore, Institute Of Southeast Asian Studies, April 1998. p2.

[103] K.C.A. Shann, 'Our Future As An Asian Nation: A Review', in Our Future As An Asian Nation: Facts And Factors Conditioning Speculative Thought Concerning Australia's Future Role In Asia, Theme Lectures From Summer School, University of Western Australia Adult Education Board, 1967. & F.K. Crowley, 'Australia: Outpost of Europe', in Australia: A Part Of Asia? Papers presented at the symposium held at the University of New South Wales on November 7 1968.

> "Malaysian leaders, and Dr Mahathir in particular, have frequently complained that Australians have not yet fully rid themselves of a 'colonial mentality' or a 'superiority complex' where their pronouncements and dealings with Malaysia are concern."[104]

The impression that Australia did not sincerely consider itself to be a part of the South East Asian region was reinforced by Australia's decision to dispatch warships to the Gulf without informing, or consulting with, any South East Asian state.[105]

As it had been suggested that one of the primary characteristics of a middle power is its capacity to play a leadership role in multilateral institutional arrangements,[106] the opportunities for *middlepowermanship* by Australia in the South East Asian region have been seriously circumscribed by the factors discussed above. Thus, Mak argues that:

> "... while Canberra can aspire to be a regional leader, it can only lead from behind. This is because Australia, .. is considered in some quarters as an opportunistic Johnny-come-lately. ... As such, any Australian initiative must be seen as a cooperative, joint effort, preferably with some Southeast Asian partner 'leading' the way"[107]

Therefore, in order to play an effective role in the South East Asian region, Australia has had to modify the strategy that it has adopted in the regions discussed earlier and take a more subtle and less vociferous role. Towards this end, it shall be argued that Australia pursued a strategy based on encouraging the development of an environment in South East Asian region where 'habits of regional security consultation and dialogue take root'. Australia's capacity to set the agenda for regional discourse through track-two and other initiatives, in the face of its exclusion

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[104] Peter Searle, 'Recalcitrant or Realpolitik? The Politics of Culture in Australia's Relations with Malaysia'. p59.
[105] J. Mohan Malik, The Gulf War: Australia's Role And Asian-Pacific Responses. p45.
[106] See Chapter 2, Process Oriented Perspectives Of Middle Powers.
[107] J.N. Mak, Defending Australia: Rhetoric Or Regional Engagement? Kuala Lumpur, Malaysian Institute of Maritime Affairs, 1995. p9.

from formal regional institutions like ASEAN, reflects its ability to influence regional affairs as a middle power in the South East Asian region.

'Leading From Behind' – *Middlepowermanship* in South East Asia

Australian attempts at an overt leadership role in the South East Asian region have enjoyed limited success and aroused some resentment. Australia's greatest recent success in a direct and visible leadership role in the South East Asian region is the role that it adopted in Cambodian issue. In 1989, Australia proposed a United Nations sponsored peace plan to address the conflict in Cambodia, and followed up on its proposal with vigorous advocacy.[108] This resulted in a peace accord in 1991, followed by popular elections in 1993.

Australia's successful diplomacy with regard to the Cambodian issue might have been simply due to the good fortune of putting forward an idea "whose time had come".[109] However, it is also a reflection of a middle power's agility in seizing 'windows of opportunity' and exploiting them through *middlepowermanship*. In particular, Australia's capacity for intensive diplomatic 'legwork' in 'driving' the agenda on the 'UN peace plan' for Cambodia must receive credit for much of the success.[110] Certainly, it is significant that after years of ASEAN diplomacy on this issue,[111] it was a middle power like Australia that brought about the final settlement to the Cambodian problem. However, Australia's success also aroused resentment

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[108] Gareth Evans & Bruce Grant, Australia's Foreign Relations: In The World Of The 1990s. pp206-218.
[109] Gareth Evans & Bruce Grant, Australia's Foreign Relations: In The World Of The 1990s. p214.
[110] Gareth Evans & Bruce Grant, Australia's Foreign Relations: In The World Of The 1990s. pp210-218.
[111] ASEAN Document Series, 1967-1985, ASEAN Secretariat, Jarkarta, 1985. pp327-347.

within South East Asia. There was irritation over what was perceived as cynical opportunism and diplomatic grandstanding. Thus, Evans' Cambodian initiative has been seen by some as stealing the credit for the years of hard work by ASEAN on a settlement.[112] This resistance towards any overt attempt by Australia to adopt a leadership role in South East Asian region meant that Australia had to adapt its strategy and exercise its influence in a more discreet manner within the region.

The ASEAN Regional Forum

The South East Asian states have generally been cool towards any hint of an attempt by extra-regional actors to influence developments within their region and this limited the scope for Australian leadership within this region. The difficulties faced by Australia are illustrated again when the concept of a 'Conference on Security and Co-operation in Asia' (CSCA) was first mooted by Evans in 1990.[113] Australia's intent was to encourage the development of a forum for formal and regular dialogue on security issues. As Evans and Grant explained:

> "The suggestion was made that if such processes of dialogue were to get under way, and if they were successful in enhancing confidence and developing new patterns of co-operation among various groups of countries in the region, then at some stage there might evolve a more formal structure – perhaps a 'Conference on Security and Co-operation in Asia' (CSCA) along the lines of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE) established in Helsinki in 1975."[114]

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[112] J.N. Mak, Defending Australia: Rhetoric or Regional Engagement? p9.
[113] Gareth Evans, 'Alliances And Change', Inaugural R J L Hawke Lecture, delivered at the Edward A Clark Centre for Australian Studies, University of Texas, by Senator Gareth Evans, Australian Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade, Austin, 9 October 1990.
[114] Gareth Evans & Bruce Grant, Australia's Foreign Relations: In The World Of The 1990s. pp110-111.

This proposal met with considerable opposition from the ASEAN states. Australia's role in the Cambodian peace process had already been perceived by some ASEAN states as an attempt to 'steal the thunder' from them and their years of diplomatic effort in this cause. Therefore, with the 'baggage' of residual resentment over Australia's Cambodian initiative, Australia's CSCA proposal was seen as yet another attempt at grandstanding by some in the region. Others criticised it as an unrealistic attempt, in spite of protestations to the contrary by Australia, to clone a European institution based on Western norms and expectations in South East Asia. Nevertheless, in spite of its initial hostile reception, Australia's proposal for a security forum did inspire a significant amount of discussion on the appropriate sort of multilateral security forum for the region. Indeed, Australia sponsored much of the discussion itself through track-two initiatives, such as academic conferences, round-table discussions and numerous discussion papers and publications on the subject. In particular, Australia initiated and supported the Asia-Pacific Round Table, which organised many conferences encouraging dialogue and networking among academics and government officials on strategic issues affecting the region. Another important Australian initiative was the development of an open source for strategic maritime information by the Australian Department of Defence, which provided a useful and uncontroversial start to a Maritime Information Database."[115] The intent of these initiatives is to "ensure that habits of regional security consultation and dialogue [would] take root" in South East Asia.[116]

The idea for a formal multilateral arrangement that institutionalised dialogue on security issues gradually gained acceptance and took the form of the Council for

[115] Gareth Evans and Paul Dibb, Australian Paper On Practical Proposals For Security Cooperation In The Asia Pacific Region, Canberra, Strategic and Defence Studies Centre, 1994. p8.
[116] Gareth Evans and Paul Dibb, Australian Paper On Practical Proposals For Security Cooperation In The Asia Pacific Region. p24.

Security and Co-operation in Asia. Sum Nahi-Ling described the Council for Security and Co-operation in Asia as a forum intended:

> "... to provide a non-government dialogue and give direction and research support for ARF in the manner that PECC used to function for APEC by sponsoring seminars and reports."[117]

Thus, through its persistent and subtle lobby, Australia did eventually secure its objective of a multilateral institutional arrangement, albeit a 'non-government' arrangement, to facilitate dialogue on security issues and to provide a structured environment for regional confidence building and security among Asia-Pacific countries.[118]

Australia's desire for a regional multilateral arrangement that would institutionalise government to government discourse on regional security in East Asia was finally realised with the establishment of the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF).[119] The ARF is a forum based on the core membership of ASEAN and was created to institutionalise and facilitate regular dialogue and consultation on East Asian security issues by ASEAN and other key actors in the Asia Pacific region.[120]

> "Australia has been an active supporter of the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) since its initiation in 1994. The ARF includes all the major powers with interests in East Asia and in 1996 it was also expanded to include India. Although still at an early stage of development, the ARF provides the basis for a process of regular dialogue about major issues of regional security and its specialist

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[117] Ngai-Ling Sum, 'The NICs and East Asian Regionalism', in Andrew Gamble & Anthony Payne, Regionalism and World Order, London, Macmillan, 1996. pp220-221.
[118] For more on CSCAP, see Desmond Ball, 'The Council for Security Cooperation in the Asia Pacific (CSCAP)', The Indonesian Quarterly, Vol. XXI, No. 4, Fourth Quarter, 1993, pp495-505.
[119] See Gareth Evans and Paul Dibb, Australian Paper On Practical Proposals For Security Cooperation In The Asia Pacific Region. & Yuen Foong Khong, 'Making Bricks Without Straw In The Asia Pacific', in The Pacific Review, Vol. 10, No. 2, 1997. p292.
[120] Paul Evans, 'Reinventing East Asia: Multilateral Cooperation and Regional Order', in East Asian Security, Spring 1996. pp18-19.

> working groups offer a concrete way of expanding communication and confidence among its members."[121]

Australia's interest in regional multilateral institutional arrangements like the ARF lies in the fact that they provided forums where security issues that affected the region could be aired and the concerns of various parties in the dispute discussed.[122] Thus, Australia's strategy in South East Asia has been centred upon persistent track-two advocacy (discussed above) for such forums.

Australia has also been energetic in its efforts to develop a concept of region that is compatible with its interests within South East Asia. In 1996, Keating revealed that Australian policy has been:

> "... to ensure that China is engaged comprehensively in global and regional institutions. This has been a major aim of APEC and the ASEAN Regional Forum – to engage China, not to contain it or isolate it ... And, in part, that means building institutions and structures which engage all the countries of the region in a dialogue about the future."[123]

In other words, regional multilateral forums were used as vehicles to advance Australia's policy vis-à-vis countries like China by providing a mechanism for engagement and dialogue. Keating also declared:

> "I think there will be all sorts of definition of the "region". I mentioned in my speech my Foreign Minister's definition which is the East Asian hemisphere, from East Asia and through Australasia. ...One thing all of us are clear about, I think, is that its' good for us to have the largest economy, the largest liberal

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[121] Dr Frank Frost, 'Australia's Foreign Relations with Asia', in Background Paper 9 1996-97, Australia's Asian Connections: A Stocktake, Department of the Parliamentary Library, Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade Group.

[122] See J.N. Mak, 'The Law Of The Sea After UNCLOS: Implications For The South China Sea Disputes', Paper presented at the Law of the Sea Conference, November 4-5 1994 held at the Centre for Maritime Policy, University of Wollongong, New South Wales, Australia. pp8-9.

[123] Paul Keating, Australia, Asia and the New Regionalism, Singapore, Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 1996. p15.

> democracy in the world, economically and strategically engaged in East Asia and that's the United States."[124]

Thus, the ARF included the nine members of ASEAN, as well as Australia, Cambodia, Canada, China, the European Union, Japan, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Russia, South Korea, and the United States.[125] In promoting the expansion of the ARF, an ASEAN based forum, to include states that spanned the Asia-Pacific, Australia sought establish a forum that would enable it to address its own security concerns. Membership of the ARF provided Australia and the other member states with the opportunity to articulate their concerns with regard to the region, and to exercise their powers of persuasion or influence within the forum.[126]

The development of regional arrangements like the ARF also helped to put forward a more liberal concept of 'region', thereby reinforcing Australia's image as a part of the East Asian region; or at the very least, a state with a legitimate stake in East Asia. Keating stresses the importance to Australia of how the region is defined, when he states:

> "I was sure that the structures supporting Australian policy in the region, and the broader regional structures themselves, needed to change. My aim was to address both the form and the intensity of Australia's engagement with the region and, in doing that, to help change the region itself. The problem which confronted us in the early 1990s was two-fold. How could Australia encourage the institutional changes in this part of the world which were increasingly necessary in the post Cold War environment? How could we ensure that Australia was part of the conversation?
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> *The institutional changes depended first on the question of how the region was defined.* [my emphasis]

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[124] Paul Keating, Australia, Asia and the New Regionalism. p31.
[125] James E. Goodby & Daniel B. O' Connor, 'The Utility of International Organizations in Regional Conflicts' in Regional Conflicts: The Challenge to US-Russian Co-operation, James E. Goodby (ed.), Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1995. p217.
[126] Ngai-Ling Sum, 'The NICs and East Asian Regionalism'. p220.

> The key issue for us was to ensure that we were dealing with a trans-Pacific region - with the Asia Pacific, not just East Asia."[127]

The use of an 'inclusive' strategy may also be seen in Australia's promotion of APEC. Australia's original proposal had been aimed at a more limited membership. Nayan Chanda points out that:

> "In March 1989 Australian Prime Minister Bob Hawke floated the idea of forming a trade and economic grouping of the Pacific Basin countries, but initially excluded the United States from the core group because of the reluctance of some Southeast Asian countries as well as Australia's own displeasure with US trade policies."[128]

It was only when Australia found itself in danger of being excluded from the EAEC that the concept of APEC was successfully re-introduced as a preferred alternative and broadened to include a more liberal definition of region. While a distinction between South East Asian and extra-regional states remained, forums like the ARF and APEC suggest that there could a role for the latter in multilateral institutional arrangements within South East Asia; and thus an opportunity for an enterprising middle power like Australia to wield influence.

Track Two Diplomacy

The strategy of 'leading from behind' may also be used to describe Australia's heavy reliance on 'track two diplomacy' and other forms of indirect diplomacy within the South East Asian region. I.M. Cumpston, commenting on Australia's contemporary role within South East Asia, states that:

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[127] Paul Keating, 'Obsession: Australia And The Challenge Of Asia'.
[128] Nayan Chanda, 'The External Environment For Southeast Asian Foreign Policy', in The Political Economy Of Foreign Policy In Southeast Asia, (eds. David Wurfel & Bruce Burton), New York, St Martin's Press, 1990. p54.

> "In this complex situation Australia's role could only be modest, but it could be persistent. The thread uniting its efforts was a call for dialogue and compromise."[129]

Therefore, while Australia's opportunities were restricted by its exclusion from ASEAN, it has continued to exploit its resources as a middle power to establish institutional processes for 'track two diplomacy' and other confidence building measures. In doing so, Australia has been able to set in place the building blocks for successful regional multilateral arrangements that could be used to defend Australian interests on such issues like the Spratly Islands dispute.

In the Spratly Islands dispute, issues of law have to be reconciled with strategic interests, economic interests, and national pride; and this must be accomplished within an atmosphere of mistrust and hostility among some of the claimants.[130] However, it has also been suggested that the reliance on international law as a response to the Spratly Islands dispute might not actually be conducive to the establishment and maintenance of order in the South East Asian region.[131] There is a fear that states might assume dangerous risks, such as the deployment of military forces or other acts asserting sovereignty, in order to establish or reinforce their claim in law. Therefore, any solution pursued required a common frame of reference for understanding the issues involved and which cultivated a greater sense of confidence and trust among the claimants. Australia's initiatives in facilitating 'track two diplomacy' and developing confidence-building measures helped to address these needs. These initiatives provided the basis for more formal regional

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[129] This was actually a comment on Australia's role in the issue of Cambodia in South East Asia. I.M. Cumpston, History of Australian Foreign Policy 1901-1991, Volume Two. p326.

[130] Choon-Ho Park, 'The South China Sea Disputes: Who Owns What', East Asia And The Law Of The Sea, Seoul, National University Press, 1983. R. Haller-Trost, The Spratly Islands: A Study on the Limitations of International Law, Canterbury, Centre of South-East Asian Studies, University of Kent, 1990.

[131] Gerardo M. C. Valero, The Dispute Over The Spratly Archipelago: Is The Question Of Sovereignty Still Relevant? p11.

institutional arrangements by helping to foster 'habits of dialogue and cooperation'.[132] Although Australia modified its role from that of assuming 'leadership' in multilateral institutional forums to facilitating the development of such forums, it continued to play a significant role in regional affairs and encouraged the development of a political environment that served its interests.[133]

The significance of Australia's role, as a middle power, within the South East Asian region may be illustrated in the manner in which it addressed its concerns over the Spratly Islands dispute through 'track two diplomacy'. As a non-claimant and a state that is considered an extra-regional actor, it would have been considered presumptuous of Australia (within the South East Asian region) to claim a leadership role in the mediation of the Spratly Islands dispute. However, there is enormous academic and international interest in this issue because of the importance of reaching an amicable settlement on the Spratly Islands dispute, as well as the fact that the process by which the dispute is resolved is of profound significance to East Asia. Therefore, discussion on the issues pertaining to the Spratly Islands dispute has been an important theme at many of the academic workshops or conferences organised by Australia or Australians. These 'academic' discussions often included government officials in their private capacity as academics or as policy experts. Therefore, they provided a useful sounding board on the sentiments and intent of the respective parties in the dispute[134] and facilitated the development of consensus on a common frame of reference with regard to the issues discussed.[135]

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[132] J. Mohan Malik, The Gulf War: Australia's Role And Asian-Pacific Responses. p2.
[133] Gareth Evans, 'Australia and Asia: Role of public diplomacy'.
[134] Gareth Evans and Paul Dibb, Australian Paper On Practical Proposals For Security Cooperation In The Asia Pacific Region. p9.
[135] David Ong & B.A. Hamzah, 'Disputed Maritime Boundaries and Claims to Offshore Territories in the Asia-Pacific Region', paper presented at International Boundaries and Environmental Security:

Australian institutions like the Strategic and Defence Studies Centre or the Department of International Relations at the Australian National University also played a significant role by extending invitations to many senior regional academics to visit with and publish working papers on issues of interest to Australia.[136]

The above initiatives facilitate the process of confidence building in the region by increasing transparency on the actions and motivation of the state actors.[137] The networking that resulted from the regular contact of the participants, in an environment that is relatively more congenial than the adversarial atmosphere that could be expected at a negotiating table, also helped to establish an epistemic community that would be more likely to find common ground on issues.[138] Therefore, Australia played a prominent role in promoting 'track two initiatives'. And the strategy of influencing mindsets and advocating norms in order to defend national interests became a significant aspect of Australia's middle power diplomacy in the South East Asian region.[139]

Australia's indirect approach towards defending its interests within the South East Asian region also included the use of regional 'proxies' where necessary. Like Australia, Indonesia has also described itself as a middle power in world affairs and perceived a significant role and responsibility for itself within the South East Asian

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Frameworks for Regional Cooperation Conference, 14-17 June 1995, held at RELC, Singapore. pp7-8.

[136] Ramesh Thakur, 'Australia's Regional Engagement'. pp12-13.

[137] Craig A. Snyder, 'Building Multilateral Security Cooperation in the South China Sea', in Asian Perspective, Vol. 21, No. 1, Spring-Summer 1997. pp14-17.

[138] See Antonio G.M. La Vina, 'South-South Cooperation in the East Asian Seas: Developing Regional Networks for Environmental Management', paper presented at International Boundaries and Environmental Security: Frameworks For Regional Conference, 14-17 June 1995, held at RELC, Singapore. Emmanuel C Lallana, 'Prospects For Cooperation in the South China Sea', paper presented at International Boundaries and Environmental Security: Frameworks For Regional Conference, 14-17 June 1995, held at RELC, Singapore.

[139] Gareth Evans and Paul Dibb, Australian Paper On Practical Proposals For Security Cooperation In The Asia Pacific Region. p3.

region.[140] Unlike Australia, Indonesia is a member of ASEAN and is unquestionably and universally regarded as a South East Asian state. Therefore, within the South East Asian region, Indonesia appeared to be in a better position to play the regional role of a middle power that Australia has traditionally adopted in other regions like the South West Pacific or the Antarctic. Recognising this, Australia and Canada have often encouraged Indonesia to assume the role of a middle power and to initiate and maintain multilateral institutional arrangements in response to regional issues in South East Asia. One expression of this role was the Indonesian-sponsored workshops, which were a series of annual discussions that focused on the Spratly Islands dispute, co-initiated by Canada and Indonesia.[141]

The Indonesian-sponsored workshops enjoyed several advantages. Indonesia's motives with regard to the issue of the Spratly Islands dispute are not regard with suspicion. In contrast, some of the East Asia states involved in the dispute are suspicious of extra-regional actors and Western states.[142] China, for example, has fears that its 'legitimate rights' would be ignored because of Western anxiety over its ascendancy in the region; and that its claims on the Spratly Islands might be compromised by attempts to 'contain' it. Western criticism and commentary have often been seen as being patronising towards East Asian nations.

There is also a desire for regional initiatives to regional issues. Therefore, even though extra-regional interests in the matter were acknowledged, the participation of extra-regional actors and their involvement in the Spratly Islands dispute was

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[140] See J. Soedjati Djiwandono, 'The Role of Major Powers and the Role of Indonesia as a Middle Power in Southwest Pacific', in The Role of Middle Powers In The Pacific: Indonesia-Canada Relations Towards The Year 2000, Jakarta, Centre For Strategic And International Studies, 1985. pp17-20.

[141] See William G. Stormont, 'Managing Potential Conflicts In The South China Sea', in Marine Policy, 1994 18 (4). pp353-356.

diplomatically kept discreet and minimal. These attitudes towards states perceived as extra-regional actors limited the role that Australia could play in the South East Asian region, even though its interests are directly engaged on issues such as the Spratly Islands dispute. In contrast, Indonesia's prestige as a leader of the non-aligned movement and as a middle power that is 'of the region' made it the perfect host for workshops that also served as forums of mediation for the claimants to the Spratly Islands.[143] At the very least, the desire to 'give face' to their Indonesian hosts would assure the attendance of the Asian states involved in the dispute and amicable discussion of the issues, even if agreement is not reached, at the workshops.

Multilateral institutional arrangements, whose primary purpose it is to provide a forum for dialogue, have often been criticised for the fact that they did not represent anything more concrete other than the opportunity for talk.[144] However, in their analysis of the relevance of game theory for understanding regimes, Andrew Kydd and Duncan Snidal point out that 'talk' is also important in the context of international relations.

> "Cheap talk refers to communication that is essentially costless in itself, where verbal communication is a prime example. Its importance for regime analysis is clear."[145]

Multilateral institutional arrangements for formal and regular discussion of security issues served a useful purpose as confidence building measures, as well as provided

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[142] J. Soedjati Djiwandono, ASEAN: An Emerging Regional Security Community? Jarkarta, Centre For Strategic And International studies, 1991. pp21-24.

[143] Indonesia played a similar role when it hosted a meeting of APEC in Bali. The significance of the role played by Indonesia might be seen in the fact that the meeting in Bali was attended by Malaysia, even though it boycotted the first.

[144] Craig A. Snyder, 'Building Multilateral Security Cooperation in the South China Sea', in Asian Perspective. pp29-30.

[145] Andrew Kydd & Duncan Snidal, 'Progress in Game-Theoretical Analysis of International Regimes', in Volker Rittberger, Regime Theory and International Regimes, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1997. pp123-124.

an opportunity to states for persuasion and advocacy.[146] Thus, the quasi-official status of the Indonesian-sponsored workshops provided an informal 'track-two' channel for diplomacy that made them more than idle academic speculation, but stop short of formal negotiations. This also allowed a more open and relaxed approach to the problem without compromising the official positions taken by the states in the dispute. Thus, even if the Indonesian-sponsored workshops should ultimately fail to bring about more formal diplomatic arrangements, they would still have served their purpose as confidence building measures.[147]

Australia played a deliberate role in fostering the "habits of dialogue and cooperation" within South East Asia. However, the extent to which Australia could claim credit for the development of new regional multilateral institutional arrangements in South East Asia is more difficult to measure. It would be difficult to prove a causal link between Australia's efforts in promoting 'track two initiatives' and the increasing preparedness of the South East Asian states to engage in a wider range of multilateral institutional arrangements. No quantitative measure exists to gauge the influence of a speech by an Australian minister, or a paper presented by an Australian academic, or a conference, seminar or workshop funded by Australia within South East Asia. Indeed, scholars like Amitav Acharya contended that it has been ASEAN, and not Australia, which has led the way in establishing new multilateral institutional arrangements to address the issues of regional security in South East Asia.[148] Nevertheless, there is considerable circumstantial evidence to

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[146] See B.A. Hamzah, The Spratlies: What Can Be Done To Enhance Confidence, Malaysia, Institute of Strategic and International Studies, 1990. pp14-16. Ji Guoxing, The Spratlys Disputes and Prospects for Settlement, Malaysia, Institute of Strategic and International Studies, 1992. pp26-27.

[147] See Ted McDorman, 'The South China Sea Islands Dispute in the 1990s: A New Multilateral Process and Continuing Friction', in The International Journal of Marine and Coastal Law, Vol. 8, No. 2, May 1993. pp263-285.

[148] Amitav Acharya, 'ASEAN and Asia-Pacific Multilateralism: Managing Regional Security', in New Challenges For ASEAN: Emerging Policy Issues, Amitav Acharya & Richard Stubbs (eds.), Vancouver, UBC Press, 1995. p182.

suggest that Australia has played a significant role in encouraging states to be more receptive to the notion of multilateral institutional arrangements.

Etty Argoes notes that the maintenance of multilateral institutional arrangements could be costly for developing countries and that most of the initiatives, not to mention funding, for such arrangements tends to be extra-regional.[149] However, a wealthy middle power like Australia has the capacity to foster institutionalised arrangements within South East Asia to facilitate dialogue and cooperation, albeit limited by its extra-regional status and has been able to play a significant role in the region in this regard. Therefore, while the extent to which the 'track-two' promotion of multilateralism by Australia contributed to the development of formal regional institutional arrangements may be doubted, the fact that it has helped to "define the terms of the security debate" and influence the nature of the discourse can not be denied.[150]

Conclusions

It has been proposed that a middle power is one that demonstrates both the ambition, as well as the capacity, to exercise significant influence within its geographic region. It has also been established that Australia's effectiveness as a middle power could be attributed to its dominant influence (because of the asymmetries) in the South West Pacific, as well as its capacity to assume a leadership role in multilateral institutional arrangements within the South West Pacific and Antarctic regions.

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[149] Etty R. Agoes, Territorial And Jurisdictional Conflicts In The South China Sea: Prospects and Constraints for Marine Regionalism. p14.
[150] Amitav Acharya, 'ASEAN and Asia-Pacific Multilateralism: Managing Regional Security'. p184.

Australia also demonstrated its ambition to assume a role of significant influence in the South East Asian region. Australia has important economic and strategic interests within the South East Asian region and these interests require Australia to seek a role of influence within the region. However, while Australia enjoyed hegemonic influence within the South East Asia in the past, the geopolitical changes that have occurred since the decolonialisation of South East Asia meant that Australia could no longer count on its previous superiority in power within that region to defend its interests. Australia is still the most powerful in the South East Asian region in many respects. However, the disparity in power between Australia and the South East Asian states is not sufficient to qualify the former as a regional great power. In contrast to its successes in the South Pacific and Antarctic region, Australia's capacity to influence developments in South East Asia through its leadership of regional multilateral institutional arrangements is also handicapped by the fact that it is not a member of the premier regional organisation, ASEAN. Australia's policy of *middlepowermanship* is also inhibited by the relative paucity of multilateral instruments within the region. These factors challenged Australia's effectiveness, as a middle power, in the South Asian region.

Australia's strategic and economic interests within the South East Asian region could not be ignored. Australia had to ensure that it remained relevant in the South East Asian region and it had to do so within its limits as a middle power; in a region that has yet to accept Australia as a part of it and where it could no longer exercise hegemonic influence. Towards this end, Australia modified its strategy of *middlepowermanship* to encourage the development of an environment that would be amenable to its interests. On occasions when Australia has attempted to adopt a

prominent leadership role, such attempts, including its successful efforts to introduce democratic elections in Cambodia and its proposal for an East Asian security forum, have often irritated states within the South East Asian region. Australia's attempts to assume the leadership of South East Asia have been regarded as presumptuous or grandstanding by its critics. Therefore, in contrast to its role in the South West Pacific and Antarctic regions, Australia has adopted a less visible role in South East Asia, deferring the leadership role to others, while actively fostering a culture that facilitates multilateral institutional arrangements and concepts of 'region' that serve its own interests. Australia's capacity to quickly adapt, as well as to switch to the 'second track' in diplomacy, demonstrated its ability to exploit available opportunities and to successfully defend its interests through a modified strategy of *middlepowermanship* in the South East Asian region.

CHAPTER 7

> "The Indian Ocean has historically played a somewhat peripheral role in Australian foreign policy, and it is only in comparatively recent times that this has begun to change."[1] – William Maley

Introduction

Australia's interests in the Indian Ocean region might best be described as cursory. The vast potential of the Indian Ocean region and its strategic and economic significance to Australia appears obvious. Yet even though the strategic and economic potential of the Indian Ocean region is recognised, the possibility of realising this potential appears to be remote and the opportunities for a middle power like Australia to play a major role within the region are limited. The absence of a significant role for Australia in the Indian Ocean region, in contrast to the influence it commands in other regions, demonstrates the significance of geography in determining the role of middle powers.

In reviewing Australia's role in the Indian Ocean region, Australia's ambition and capacity to exercise significant influence within that region are once again employed as benchmarks to measure its effectiveness as a middle power. In contrast to the regions surveyed earlier, Australia's role in the Indian Ocean has seen relatively little

[1] William Maley, 'Australia And The Indian Ocean', in Australian Foreign Policy: Into The New Millennium, F.A. Mediansky (ed.), South Melbourne, Macmillan, 1997. p269.

change. In spite of periodic rhetoric to the contrary, Australia has not shown much interest in playing a more significant role within the Indian Ocean region. As a dominion in the British Empire, and subsequently, as an ally of the United States, Australia has supported the presence of its great and powerful friends within the Indian Ocean region. However, as a middle power, Australia has yet to demonstrate an ambition to play a more direct role in its own capacity in the region. A review of Australia's past record and its capabilities also suggests that its capacity to play a significant role in the Indian Ocean region is likely to be limited.

The absence of and resistance to the development of significant multilateral institutional arrangements within the Indian Ocean region[2] limits the usefulness of process oriented perspectives and the effectiveness of *middlepowermanship* as a foreign policy strategy is circumscribed. In contrast, structuralist (power-oriented) perspectives, which advance the view that a middle power like Australia is unlikely to wield significant influence in a region occupied by much larger states with greater potential in terms of power, appear to be of greater relevance. And many of the archetypal expectations of the Neo-Realist school are validated within the Indian Ocean region.

This chapter is divided into four sections. The first section begins by questioning the viability of the concept of an 'Indian Ocean region'. It argues that the concept of an Indian Ocean region has remained vague and that long-standing hostilities make it difficult for a sense of regionalism to develop. Thus, while it is possible to delimit the geographical boundaries of an area that we can call the Indian Ocean region, the concept of such a region lacks the collective sense of identity that is the basis of the

[2] The resistance to the development of regional multilateral institutional arrangements is largely due to historical factors that will be discussed later in this chapter.

regional political communities, which characterises the regions discussed in earlier chapters.

The second section reviews Australia's interests within the Indian Ocean region. It examines Australia's stated interests within the Indian Ocean region and queries the extent to which attention has been given to these interests in its foreign policy. It argues that Australia's interests within the Indian Ocean have yet to be a priority in its foreign policy, and consequently, its ambitions for influence within the Indian Ocean region have been relatively modest.

The third section reviews Australia's capacity to assume a role of significant influence within the Indian Ocean region. It argues that Australia's potential role, as a middle power, in the Indian Ocean region must be considered in the light of the traditional hostilities between India and the other states within the region, as well as the aspirations of the former to be considered a great power. India's great power ambitions meant assertions of Indian hegemony that limited a leadership role for Australia within the Indian Ocean region. The hostility and rivalry between India and its neighbours also presented a significant obstacle to the development of regional multilateral institutional arrangements as such initiatives are contingent upon the recognition of common interests. This in turn reduces the opportunities for a middle power like Australia to seize the opportunities inherent in such regional arrangements for influence, as it has done in other regions. Therefore, Australia has been only capable of a modest role within the Indian Ocean region thus far. And even though Australia does have a few concerns about strategic developments within the Indian Ocean region, its capacity to address those concerns directly have been limited.

The fourth section addresses the issue of Australia's limited interests in the Indian Ocean region and how it has been able to compensate for its modest role within the region through its relationship with its great power ally, the United States. It argues that Australia has supported United States interests within the Indian Ocean region as being consistent with its own and has relied on the strategic presence of the United States on the island military base of Diego Garcia to defend its own interests.

The chapter concludes that Australia's experience within the Indian Ocean region highlights the challenges for a middle power in a region where it is not only unable to capitalise on asymmetries of power but where multilateral institutional arrangements through which it might defend its interests are also absent. Many issues affecting the Indian Ocean littorals held in abeyance during the Cold War remain unresolved, including the long-standing hostility between the various littorals of the Indian Ocean, which have assumed greater significance with the end of the Cold War. Many of these issues have yet to affect Australia's interests directly or adversely. However, it is proposed that these issues may be best addressed while they are inchoate and before they grow in complexity into more intractable problems fed by politics, jealously, and regional rivalries. Thus, it is proposed that there is a potential role for a middle power like Australia in the Indian Ocean to foster the development of regional multilateral arrangements that could serve as confidence building measures. Nevertheless, it is also acknowledged that although Australia has demonstrated consistency by applying the strategy of *middlepowermanship* towards the Indian Ocean region, such efforts have yet to achieve significant success. Instead, Australia has had to rely on great power patrons to defend its interests in order to address its own limitations as a middle power, within the Indian Ocean.

The Indian Ocean Region

Source: Perry-Castañeda Library Map Collection, University of Texas at Austin, http://www.lib.utexas.edu/Libs/PCL/Map_collection/Map_collection.html

The Indian Ocean is the third largest of the world's oceans. It is flanked by the continent of Africa to its West, the subcontinent of India to its North, and South East Asia and Australia to its East. The waters of the Indian Ocean sweep across the shores of more than 30 countries, which accounts for over 31 per cent of the world population. Encompassing a population of almost two billion, the market potential of the countries on the Indian Ocean Rim is tremendous.[3] Four main gateways to major sea routes lead into the Indian Ocean. The Suez Canal links the Mediterranean Sea to the Indian Ocean via the Red Sea and the Gulf of Yemen. The Cape of Good Hope links the Atlantic to the Indian Ocean. The South China Sea (through the Straits of Malacca) and the Java Sea (through the Sunda Straits) links East Asia to the Indian

Ocean. The Bass Straits links the Indian Ocean to the Pacific Ocean.[4] These sea routes serve intra-regional trade among the littorals of the Indian Ocean as well as trade between Europe and Asia, including the shipments of oil that 'flow' from the Persian Gulf States to Japan.

Although the geographic parameters of the Indian Ocean may be used as a guide to establish the notion of an Indian Ocean 'region', the validity of such a grouping is doubtful. In contrast to the earlier three regions reviewed, there is no significant basis for the concept of an Indian Ocean region expressed in terms of a political *community*. Indeed, Prescott expresses the view that:

> "The Indian Ocean exists as a coherent political concept only in the rhetoric of politicians."[5]

The reference to a region in international relations usually infers some sense of collective identity or at least some sense of common interests among polities situated within a geographic locale vis-à-vis the general state system. However, states along the eastern shore of the African continent would have little in common with states in Middle East, which in turn would have little in common with states on the Indian subcontinent or South East Asia, even though all of them may be described as Indian Ocean littorals. Therefore, given the disparate priorities and interests of the polities that lie on the rim of the Indian Ocean, it is debatable whether these states represent a sufficiently cohesive political community or possess a regional identity, which merits the label of an Indian Ocean region.[6] Moreover, unlike the South West Pacific, South

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[3] Joseph H.L. Tan, Straits Times, March 20 1997.
[4] For a more detailed discussion of the geographic parameters of the Indian Ocean, see Vivian Forbes, The Maritime Boundaries Of The Indian Ocean Region, Singapore, National University of Singapore, 1995. pp27-33, 35-41.
[5] Victor Prescott, The Maritime Political Boundaries Of The World, London, Methuen, 1985. p178.
[6] Bateman and Bergin identified 46 independent states that may be considered littorals of the Indian Ocean. Sam Bateman and Anthony Bergin, 'Building Blocks for Maritime Security in the Indian Ocean', Ocean Development & International Law, 1996, p237.

East Asian or Antarctic regions, which have been associated with such regional groupings as the South Pacific Forum, ASEAN and the Antarctic Treaty Consultative Parties, a cohesive regional grouping associated with the Indian Ocean region has yet to emerge. Instead, the size and composition of the Indian Ocean region have complicated the development of a sense of regionalism and regional multilateral institutional arrangements within the region.

In spite of the fact that it is ill defined, there is usually an expectation that the Indian sub-continent is included when a reference to the Indian Ocean region is made.[7] Therefore, to avoid the complications that would arise in a discussion based on a broad conceptual framework, a more narrow definition of the Indian Ocean region is stipulated for this chapter. While recognising the fact that the boundaries of an Indian Ocean region have yet to be clearly defined, it is proposed that the core of such a region is likely to be centred on South Asia and particularly on India. Australia's interests within the Indian Ocean region have been strongly engaged by developments in the Indian sub-continent during the Cold War and it is likely to continue have interests in the subcontinent. Therefore, to focus attention where Australian interests are most significantly engaged, the Indian Ocean region shall be deemed to refer to the region framed by the Indian sub-continent in the West and Australia in the East.

[7] See for example, Robert Bruce, 'A West Coast Perspective', in Strategic and Naval Roles: Issues for a Medium Power, Sam Bateman and Dick Sherwood (eds.), Canberra, Strategic and Defence Studies Centre, 1993. pp125-134.

Australian Interests In The Indian Ocean Region

The Australian continent occupies the South East corner of the Indian Ocean and Australia is custodian of one of the gateways (via the Bass Straits) between the Indian Ocean and the Pacific. Several offshore Australian Territories lie within the Indian Ocean, including the Cocos and Christmas Islands.[8] A huge area of the Australian exclusive economic zone lies within the Indian Ocean and a large proportion of Australian shipping plies the waters of the Indian Ocean. Therefore, as a littoral, it would have been reasonable to expect Australia to demonstrate an interest (as it has done in other regions) in assuming an influential role within the Indian Ocean. However, except for displaying some concern about the strategic implications of Soviet access to the Indian Ocean during the Cold War, Australia has, thus far, only expressed a mild interest in the Indian Ocean region.

Australia has generally pursued a modest role within the Indian Ocean region. Australia's attitude towards the Indian Ocean region is unusual because although it clearly has interests within the region, it has only demonstrated a mild ambition to play a more significant and direct role in defending those interests. In contrast to South East Asia or the South West Pacific, which have been frequently alluded to in official speeches and the focus of numerous reports and studies, Australia's attitude towards the Indian Ocean region appears to be characterised by indifference. Sandy Gordon drew attention to this impression when he made the observation that "compared with the cut-and-thrust of trans-Pacific strategy and trade, South Asia was

[8] Sam Bateman, 'The Indian Ocean in Australia's Maritime Strategy', in Maritime Studies 71, July/August 1993. p12.

perceived to lie in a strategic and economic backwater."[9] Nor has the Indian Ocean region captured the popular imagination in Australia in the way that Antarctica does.

There is an impression that references to the Indian Ocean region in Australian policy come as an afterthought, a sense that while the region should not be ignored, it is not considered a priority on Australia's foreign policy agenda either.[10] Certainly, the weight that Australian foreign policy has attached to the Indian Ocean region might be inferred from the fact that the latter received far less attention in comparison to the effort employed to establish an Australian presence in the South West Pacific, Antarctic, and South East Asian regions. Indeed, Bill Hayden has likened "Australia's attitude to the Indian Ocean to 'Aunt Tilly's expensive bone china teaset', an object of occasional curiosity but of not much practical use."[11]

Two related concerns, shipping and security represent Australia's primary interests in the Indian Ocean region. For much of its history, the Indian Ocean has been a conduit of trade between the civilisations of the East and the West and a source of wealth and power to the naval powers that ruled its sea-lanes.[12] Indian empires controlling the Indian Ocean were able to influence the establishment of the South East Asian empires of Sri Vijaya, Majapahit and Mataram. Islam was also brought to South East Asia through the trade routes of the Indian Ocean. The Portuguese, the Dutch, and then the British established control over the South East Asian region and the trade routes to the East through their domination of the Indian Ocean.[13] Thus,

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[9] Sandy Gordon, The Search For Substance: Australia-India Relations Into The Nineties And Beyond, Canberra, Australia Foreign Policy Publications Programme, 1993. p3.
[10] See also Sandy Gordon, The Search For Substance: Australia-India Relations Into The Nineties And Beyond.
[11] Sandy Gordon, The Search For Substance: Australia-India Relations Into The Nineties And Beyond. p21.
[12] Vivian Forbes, The Maritime Boundaries Of The Indian Ocean Region. pp41-51.
[13] V.K. Bhasin, Super Power Rivalry in the Indian Ocean, New Delhi, S. Chand & Company Ltd, 1981. pp1-8.

control of the Indian Ocean region has traditionally been the prelude towards influence over much of the South East Asian region.

The Second World War brought an end to the colonial era. The independence of Indonesia and India in 1945 and 1947 respectively[14] inspired many of the other states under colonial rule along the Indian Ocean rim and prompted them to follow with their own declarations of independence. However, while it might be argued that the end of the colonial era began in the Indian Ocean, the shadow of extra-regional power and influence remained in the region even after the period of de-colonialisation. The advent of the Cold War perpetuated the presence of extra-regional great powers in the Indian Ocean. In pursuit of their interests during the Cold War and in the context of their rivalry with each other, the United States built and maintained a naval base in Diego Garcia, whereas the Soviet Union conducted regular ship visits to ports within the region. These developments coloured the subsequent developments in the Indian Ocean region, as well as Australia's own relationship with the Indian Ocean region.

In contrast to the situation in the other geographic regions adjacent to Australia, the British Empire was firmly entrenched in India and Burma (Myanmar) prior to the Second World War. Therefore the anxieties that characterised Australia's usual attitude towards near-lying regions (especially with regard to potential threats from rivals to its great power allies) were never extended towards the Indian Ocean region – until the Cold War. Australian really only expressed concern about the Indian Ocean region after the Second World War when the region became one of several theatres of operations in the Cold War with the Soviet Union.

The Cold War revived Australia's old fears of a potential threat from a hostile power within its own geographic region. Australia's strategic perceptions of the Indian Ocean region during this period are revealed in the Australian Defence White Paper of 1976. In the White Paper, Australia "expressed concern at the Soviet presence in the Indian Ocean and the build up of Russian military strength."[15] While that concern was qualified by the view "that the Indian Ocean was of marginal importance to the central balance" in the Cold War, the White Paper stressed "the security of oil to major allies" and the need to remain watchful of the situation in the Indian Ocean.[16] Fears that the Soviet Union would secure a foothold within the Indian Ocean region and thereby gain a strategic vantage from which to threaten Australian security were also heightened with the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1980. Therefore, Australian policy towards the Indian Ocean region during the Cold War was based on addressing the potential threat that the Soviet Union might pose to it from within that region.

As with its practice in the past when confronted with the presence of a rival power within its geographic region, Australian interests in the Indian Ocean became "conceived in terms of neutralising potential threats from the region."[17] Towards that end, Australia exploited its relationship with the United States, its great and powerful friend. Australia actively supported the presence of the United States within the Indian Ocean region as a means to safeguard its own interests within the region. In doing so, Australia returned to its tried and true policy of dependence upon a trusted

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[14] Indonesia declared its independence in 1945, but it was engaged in an armed struggle for independence against the Netherlands for control of Indonesian territories (Dutch East Indies) till 1949.

[15] Defence White Paper, Canberra, Commonwealth of Australia, 1976.

[16] Kim C. Beazley and Ian Clark, The Politics of Intrusion: The Super Powers and the Indian Ocean, Sydney, Alternative Publishing Cooperative Ltd, 1979. p138.

and powerful ally. Thus, as with its 'early policy' in the South West Pacific and Antarctic regions, Australia's strategy in the Indian Ocean has been to ensure the pre-eminence of its great power ally within the region. Australia's policy and role might be seen in its effort to provide logistical and other assistance to support the military presence of the United States in the Indian Ocean. Australia's efforts also included hosting a communications base at Exmouth, the development of naval facilities at Cockburn Sound (where the Australian submarine fleet is believed to be based), as well as positioning half its surface fleet at Stirling in Western Australia.[18]

Australia has consistently and openly voiced strong support for a dominant American military presence within the region. In particular, the conservative governments in Australia have always been firm in their advocacy for a strong American military presence in the Indian Ocean and this became a pronounced feature of their foreign policy objectives towards that region. While pursuing essentially the same line, the Labor approach to the Indian Ocean made some attempt to distinguish its foreign policy from its conservative counterpart by including support for the concept of a 'Zone Of Peace' in the Indian Ocean. It also called for 'mutual reduction' in the military presence of the two superpowers within the region. Nevertheless, these objectives were qualified by the recognition that:

> "diplomatic activity on the Indian Ocean issue would however be pursued along bilateral channels using the American relationship to press upon the United States the value of limiting its presence in the area."[19]

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[17] Kim C. Beazley and Ian Clark, The Politics of Intrusion: The Super Powers and the Indian Ocean. p130.
[18] Vivian Forbes, The Maritime Boundaries Of The Indian Ocean Region. p55. Sandy Gordon, The Search For Substance: Australia-India Relations Into The Nineties And Beyond. pp18-19.
[19] Kim C. Beazley & Ian Clark, The Politics of Intrusion: The Super Powers and the Indian Ocean. p134.

Given Labor's predilection for multilateralism and regionalism in foreign policy, this represented a strong concession to the view that such instruments had only limited utility in the Indian Ocean region, relative to the reliance on Australia's 'great and powerful friend'. Instead, Beazley and Clark argued that:

> "This view accorded with a long standing attitude of Whitlam's on foreign policy that the American relationship ought to be used to press upon the United States distinctively Australian positions."[20]

Regardless of whether it was Fraser's support for a strong American presence or the Whitlam's efforts to reduce the military presence of both super powers in the Indian Ocean region, Australia's relationship with the United States has been identified as the key to defending its interests in that region.[21]

Australia's policy of supporting the presence of a more powerful ally to defend its interests in the Indian Ocean region is contingent upon the United States' assessments of its own need to remain engaged in the region. However, the geo-political changes following the end of the Cold War have forced a re-assessment of United States' priorities in, and its commitment of military forces to, the Indian Ocean region. Therefore, the end of the Cold War and the fact that no rival super power is likely to pose a threat to American interests in the Indian Ocean region suggests that the United States might be prompted to reduce its presence in the Indian Ocean region. On the other hand, the recent Gulf War, India and Pakistan's entry into the nuclear club, and the numerous hot-spots of violence within or near the India Ocean region suggests that the United States is likely to remain at its military base in Diego Garcia for some time.

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[20] Kim C. Beazley & Ian Clark, The Politics of Intrusion: The Super Powers and the Indian Ocean. p134.
[21] Kim C. Beazley & Ian Clark, The Politics of Intrusion: The Super Powers and the Indian Ocean. pp127-141.

The geopolitical changes that required the United States to reassess its role within the Indian Ocean also brought about a reappraisal of Australia's own perceptions of its interests within the region. The dissolution of the Soviet Union meant that the possibility of a direct security threat to Australia, resulting from the Soviet presence in Indian Ocean region, was no longer an issue. Thus, one of Australia's primary reasons for supporting a strong United States presence within the Indian Ocean region became irrelevant.

In contrast to the 1976 White Paper, the Australian Defence White Paper 1994 totally omitted any strategic assessment of the Indian Ocean. Indeed, except for some expressions of intent to foster closer bilateral ties with the more powerful Indian Ocean littoral states such as India and Pakistan, there were no references to the Indian Ocean as a strategic environment at all. In part, this relaxed attitude might also have been due to the assessment that with the end of the Cold War, even the most powerful (arguably) of the Indian Ocean littoral states, India, would not be able to pose a threat to Australia. Robert Bruce argues that:

> "India still has limited capability to project force very far from India, and mainland Australia is out of reach of India's limited power-projection capabilities and will remain so during the next ten years."[22]

Therefore, with the threat of the Cold War ended, Australia's primary interests within the Indian Ocean have changed. While some issues remain, including the potential for violent conflict in Sri Lanka, Kashmir, India and Pakistan, these issues are not perceived as a direct threat to Australia's security.

Australia continues to support for the presence of the United States in the Indian Ocean region but this is based primarily on its role as a loyal ally as opposed to the need to counter a perceived threat. Australia might also be motivated by the fact such a policy corresponded with its broader objective of ensuring that the United States remains actively engaged in international affairs in a post Cold War era. However, for its own part, Australia would have to redefine its own relationship with the Indian Ocean region and the role that it seeks to play within that region.

In contrast to its relationship with the South West Pacific, Antarctic or South East Asian regions, Australia's engagement with the Indian Ocean region has been shaped primarily by security issues and the depth that characterised its role in other regions is absent. Australia's relationship with the Indian Ocean region lacked the extensive economic interests that had characterised its relationship with South East Asia. The sense of political responsibility and leadership that have distinguished Australia's role in the South West Pacific region are also absent in its policy towards the Indian Ocean region. Nor is Australia's evangelical passion with regard to its pursuit of scientific interests and environmental concerns in the Antarctic region reprised in the Indian Ocean region. Indeed, apart from the game of cricket, Australia has relatively little in common with the states in the Indian Ocean region. Consequently, with the end of the Cold War, Australia found itself in a policy vacuum with respect to the Indian Ocean region and it has yet to clearly define the nature and scope of its role as a middle power in that region.

Recent assessments of Australia's role within the Indian Ocean region have challenged its sense of complacency and argued for a more proactive policy for

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[22] Robert Bruce, 'A West Coast Perspective'. p131.

Australia within the region.[23] The premise is that as a littoral of the Indian Ocean, and a middle power in the region, Australia should seek to influence developments in the Indian Ocean, and that it has the capacity to do so through the development of multilateral institutional arrangements. The object is for Australia to foster an environment that is favourable to its interests within the Indian Ocean through its own efforts. This has been a strategy that has been pursued by Australia in the South East Asian region with some success. However, even though the advocacy for the development of multilateral institutions has been determined and enthusiastic, the results in the Indian Ocean region have been less encouraging, especially when compared with the successes of Australian diplomacy, both 'track two' and formal, in other regions. Moreover, given the intermittent interest in the Indian Ocean region displayed by Australia to-date, Australia's role within that region is likely to remain modest. And in view of the constraints on Australia in terms of its resources and priorities, Australian interests and diplomacy in the Indian Ocean region are likely to take second place to its pursuit of *middlepowermanship* elsewhere.

There are many difficulties confronting Australia's attempts to chart a new course for itself in the Indian Ocean. Strategically, the region posed no threat to Australia now that the Soviet Union is defunct. Although several Indian Ocean littorals possessed significant military capabilities, none of them are significant naval powers and lacked the capacity to project their power beyond the Indian sub-continent. Indeed, both Bhutan and Nepal are landlocked and their strategic significance to Australia (if any) would be minimal. In economic terms, there is very little within the Indian Ocean region to interest Australia. Many of the region's economies are still in the early stages of development and the largest economy, India, is tightly controlled and

[23] Sam Bateman and Anthony Bergin, 'Building Blocks for Maritime Security in the Indian Ocean'.

relatively 'closed'.[24] While there is some scope for greater social interaction, visitor numbers and other forms of social contact between Australia and the Indian Ocean region have been relatively modest in comparison with other regions. Bateman cites another reason for Australia's neglect of the Indian Ocean region and argues that historical factors, such as the fact that Australia's main population and industrial infrastructure are concentrated on its South East Coast, may have conditioned Australia's perspective of the world around it.[25] These factors suggest that the scope of Australian interests in the Indian Ocean region is likely to continue to be limited.

In short, Australia has traditionally regarded the Indian Ocean region with complacency and has been content to rely on the presence of the United States there to safeguard its interests. Currently, Australia is unlikely to be threatened by any naval power of significance from within Indian Ocean region and its economic interests in that region are minimal. Therefore, Australia's interest in the Indian Ocean region have been sporadic and mild and this represents a sharp contrast to its attitude within the South West Pacific, South East Asia and Antarctic regions where it has demonstrated its ambition to assume a role of influence and leadership.

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[24] Sandy Gordon, The Search For Substance: Australia-India Relations Into The Nineties And Beyond. p4. See also East Asia Analytical Unit, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, India's Economy At The Midnight Hour: Australia's India Strategy, Commonwealth of Australia, 1994.
[25] Sam Bateman, 'The Indian Ocean in Australia's Maritime Strategy'. p11.

Australia's Capacity For Influence In The Indian Ocean

Australia is an affluent middle power within the Indian Ocean region and possessed significant military capabilities. However, it would have difficulty in translating these resources into influence within the Indian Ocean region. Therefore, Australia's apparent lack of interest in assuming a leadership role as a middle power in the Indian Ocean region might also be attributed to the possibility that it had moderated its ambitions because it lacked the capacity to assume such a role. Instead, Australia has traditionally relied upon great powers, notably its great and powerful friends the United Kingdom and the United States, to defend its interests within the Indian Ocean region.

Australia could not rely on asymmetrical superiority of power between itself and the other states in the Indian Ocean region. Nor could Australia pursue a strategy of *middlepowermanship* and use regional multilateral institutional arrangements as a vehicle of influence within the Indian Ocean region because such arrangements were few and had a limited role there.

The immense populations of the states within the Indian Ocean region dwarfed that of Australia. Although Australia might be much wealthier in per capita terms, the very size of the populations of these states limit the utility of Australia's wealth as an instrument of foreign policy. Thus, even if Australia were to allocate its entire foreign aid budget to the Indian Ocean region, the impact would be relatively less than a similar allocation to the South Pacific or the South East Asian region.[26]

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[26] See A. Clunies, 'Possibilities Of Australian Economic Assistance To India', in J.D.B. Miller (ed.), India, Japan, Australia: Partners In Asia?, Canberra, Australian National University Press, 1968. pp180-182.

Countries	GNP (US $ million)	Population	GNP per capita (US $)	Armed Forces	Military Expenditure (% of GNP)
Australia	310,050	18,025,000	17,510	56,100	2.4%
IOR Total	356,737	1,235,333,000	313	2,015,500	3.48%
India	262,810	935,744,000	290	1,145,000	3.3%
Bangladesh	25,882	120,093,000	220	115,500	1.5%
Bhutan	253	816,000	170	7,000	-
Nepal	3,174	20,093,000	160	35,000	1.4%
Pakistan	54,045	140,497,000	440	587,000	6.4%
Sri Lanka	10,573	18,090,000	600	126,000	4.8%

Source: Encyclopædia Britannica CD 97

India's GNP is smaller than that of Australia's. However, India has historically been cast in the role of hegemon within the Indian Ocean region. Johan Galtung ranked India as the 7th largest state in the world with the second largest population, the 4th largest army, and the 6th largest navy.[27] Galtung also points out that:

> "a country does not accumulate assets with GNP/capita but with the GNP; and India's GNP is big enough in absolute terms."[28]

India's defence industries are impressive, with research and development amounting to a value of S$1.58 billion, conducted in forty laboratories and production in thirty-five factories.[29] Thus, even though Australia is clearly the wealthiest among the Indian Ocean states, Australia's capacity to assume a role of influence within the Indian Ocean is limited with the presence of India.

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[27] Johan Galtung, On The Way To Superpower Status: India And The EC Compared, Indian Ocean Centre For Peace Studies, Occasional Paper No. 2, 1991. p5.
[28] Johan Galtung, On The Way To Superpower Status: India And The EC Compared. p5.
[29] This figure does not include the nuclear and space industries, which might also spawn military-related technologies. A.D. Gordon, 'India, Neigbourhood And Region', Agenda For The Nineties:

Australia has enjoyed some diplomatic success in engaging other Asian powers such as China and Japan. However, the capacity to assume a role of influence in the Indian Ocean region, and with respect to India, has eluded Australia so far. Comparing Australia's diplomatic successes in China with the disappointing results with regard to India, Sandy Gordon explains that:

> "For China, Australia provided a valuable point of entry into the process of modernisation without the pitfalls associated with over-dependence on any of the large powers. For many years, India had no such imperative driving its relations with Australia. Those Australian diplomats, officials and politicians who dealt with both nations quickly noticed a willingness on the part of China to 'lock into' the benefits provided by Australia, whereas often the Indian response gave the impression that Australia did not matter."[30]

While subjective, Gordon's observations suggest that India's resistance to Australia's influence has been an impediment to the latter's capacity to play a significant role in the region. J. Malik also adds that:

> "it is obvious that though India regards Australia as a legitimate Indian Ocean power and a friendly state whose influence contributes to regional stability, it would not look favourably on Australia's active role in areas in India's vicinity or places close to what it considers its sphere of influence (e.g. the northern Indian Ocean region and Sri Lanka).[31]

In short, given its history, size and share of the region's resources, India has regarded itself as a regional great power and is in a strong position to claim such a role – even if its other neighbours have always hotly contested that assumption.[32] Therefore, in view of the hegemonic role occupied by India, which has demonstrated both the

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Studies Of The Context For Australian Choices In Foreign And Defence Policy, Coral Bell (ed.), Melbourne, Longman Cheshire, 1991. p181.

[30] Sandy Gordon, The Search For Substance: Australia-India Relations Into The Nineties And Beyond. p3.

[31] J. Mohan Malik, The Gulf War: Australia's Role And Asian-Pacific Responses, Canberra, Strategic and Defence Studies Centre, 1992. p24.

ambition and capacity to assume such a role, Australia's capacity to influence developments in the Indian Ocean region is limited.

Limits Of *Middlepowermanship* In The Indian Ocean Region

The practice of *middlepowermanship* is a means by which Australia has successfully assumed an influential role in three regional subsets of the general state system, namely the South Pacific, the Antarctic and the South East Asian regions. However, there have been fewer opportunities for Australia to capitalise on its strengths in regional institutional multilateral arrangements within the Indian Ocean region in order to assume a more influential role and consequently very limited scope for a strategy of *middlepowermanship.*

The smaller states of the Indian Ocean region have traditionally been suspicious of any attempt by India to dominate the region but thus far any resistance to Indian hegemony has been unilateral and uncoordinated. There have been no indications that a multilateral institutional arrangement, along the lines of the Five Power Defence Arrangement (FPDA) in the South East Asian region, would be developed by the smaller states as a counter-balance to India. Nor has Australia demonstrated an interest in the development of any such arrangement. Arguably, Australia's apathy towards any arrangements that might have been perceived as an anti-India coalition might be explained by its concern that any such initiative is more likely to provoke a confrontation within the region rather than forestall one. The fear that any such move during the Cold War might provoke India to become more sympathetic towards the

[32] R.P. Anand, 'South Asia and the Law of the Sea: Problems and Prospects', paper presented at the 28th Annual Law of the Sea Conference, 11-14 July 1994, Honolulu, Hawaii. pp3-8.

Soviet Union might also explain the absence of any FPDA-type security arrangement in the Indian Ocean region.

The absence of any significant multilateral regional institutions because of the longstanding antagonism between the various polities in the region has been the most significant obstacle to successful *middlepowermanship* from middle powers like Australia. Philip Allen argues that:

> "Despite chauvinisms to the contrary, there are no solid precedents for Indian Ocean unity. Elaborate networks of commercial and cultural interchange have left fundamental loyalties fragmented along personal, ethnic, class and caste – occasionally national – demarkations, without establishing the political nucleus for an Indian Ocean civilization."[33]

The frequent outbreak of internecine wars, political assassinations and expressions of chauvinism within the region have not improved the situation.[34] Consequently, multilateral arrangements, which are premised on cooperation or at least the acknowledgement of common ground, have been unsurprisingly absent in the Indian Ocean region.

One of the best opportunities for the development of regional multilateral institutional arrangements in the Indian Ocean region surfaced in the 1970s. Suspicion of the former colonial powers, the advent of the Cold War, and the threat of a nuclear holocaust had sparked resistance to the growing military presence of extra-regional powers within the Indian Ocean region. In addition to the concerns about neo-colonialism, there were also fears that the polities of the Indian Ocean region would be embroiled in any potential nuclear conflict. Similar concerns had

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[33] Philip M. Allen, Security And Nationalism In The Indian Ocean: Lessons From The Latin Quarter Islands, Boulder, Westview Press, 1987. p8.

emerged in the South West Pacific and South East Asian region where the South Pacific Nuclear Free Zone (SPNFZ) and the Zone of Peace and Neutrality (ZOFPAN) had been proposed respectively. While the actual effectiveness of these 'nuclear-free' zones might have been in question, they nevertheless provided a cause and focus for regionalism in these regions, and to some extent, they represented building blocks for more comprehensive multilateral security measures or other regional arrangements. In the Antarctic region, concerns about the potential presence of military forces and nuclear weapons within the region because of the Cold War brought about the Antarctic Treaty, which subsequently led to a comprehensive network of regional multilateral institutional arrangements. Thus, identical concerns about the Cold War and the presence of super power military forces within the Indian Ocean region led to similar calls for regional multilateral arrangements to address the issue of extra-regional conflict, especially nuclear conflict.

In 1971, Sri Lanka proposed a de-militarised Indian Ocean and called for the Indian Ocean to be declared a 'Zone of Peace'. The concept of a Zone of Peace within the Indian Ocean was given some support, especially by the smaller East African nations. The Soviet Union and China even voted in support of the Zone of Peace when it was introduced as a resolution in the United Nations. However, given the fact that neither the Soviet Union or China was as well situated in the Indian Ocean as the United States and its allies, a de-militarised Indian Ocean would not have affected their interests as much. In contrast,

> "The United States and other leading Western nations with interests in the Indian Ocean were opposed to the ZOP proposal for fundamental reasons of strategy. In their view, the Indian Ocean was the 'great connector' into the Middle East. Creation of a ZOP would leave the Western position exposed vis-à-vis the Soviet

[34] See Sandy Gordon, The Search For Substance: Australia-India Relations Into The Nineties And Beyond. pp59-72.

> Union in the event of a another Middle East crisis, since the latter had potential land access to the region and was much more proximate to it. Nor would it allow the West to counter the Soviet presence in Afghanistan or Soviet influence through 'proxies' such as South Yemen."[35]

Not surprisingly, the United States, which is well entrenched at Diego Garcia, and its allies ignored the attempt to exclude them from the Indian Ocean.

Australia's response to the concept of a zone of peace was subtle. Australia was a member of the United Nations Ad Hoc Committee on the Indian Ocean that explored the feasibility of Sri Lanka's proposal to designate the Indian Ocean region a Zone Of Peace. However, as Gordon explains:

> "The Australian government of the day knew ... that such efforts would not bear fruit because of strong opposition to them from the US, Britain and France. Australia's underlying attitude to a ZOP in the Indian Ocean paralleled its attitude to a Southwest Pacific Nuclear Weapons free Zone; that is it was dictated largely by the US alliance interests, which were seen to parallel Australia's interests."[36]

Thus, Australia was secure in the knowledge that its interests would continue to be defended by the military presence of the United States in the Indian Ocean region and could avoid taking an overt role in 'opposing' some of the other Indian Ocean littoral states on this issue. Australia's approach on this issue contrasts with the blunt comments of less subtle littorals that shared its reservations about the wisdom of a 'zone of peace'. Singapore was one of the absentees when Sri Lanka proposed the resolution for a Zone of Peace at the United Nations but explaining his country's decision a few days later, S. Rajaratnam, the foreign minister at the time said:

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[35] Sandy Gordon, The Search For Substance: Australia-India Relations Into The Nineties And Beyond. p15

[36] Sandy Gordon, The Search For Substance: Australia-India Relations Into The Nineties And Beyond. p15.

> "It would, therefore, be unrealistic to believe that the Indian Ocean would for long remain a vacuum of power or that the Big Powers would be prepared to see it come under the collective responsibility of many nations fringing this ocean. These nations have yet to develop a naval capacity sufficiently credible for them to fill the vacuum themselves, assuming they can act collectively in this matter. ... Nor are declarations that this Ocean should be a Zone of Peace likely to frighten away the major naval powers, the most powerful of whom are the United States and the Soviet Union. Both are newcomers to the area. They have no established areas of interest to delimit their presently unlimited ambitions."[37]

Whatever its reasons, Singapore's reservations about the Zone of Peace in the Indian Ocean region might be taken as an informative indicator of the lack of consensus within the Indian Ocean region. Especially as Singapore had endorsed the concept of ZOFPAN in a show of solidarity with other South East Asian states, even though the reservations expressed about the Zone of Peace in the Indian Ocean region should also apply to South East Asia. Philip Allen describes the absence of solidarity within the Indian Ocean region thus:

> "... the solidarity that all pledge as a principle of third world destiny is nullified by the exigencies of discreet states, competitive among themselves, insecure within their own societies, tributary to overseas patrons of economic, political, military, and/or ideological stability."[38]

A crucial concern for many states in the Indian Ocean region, with regard to the issue of the proposed 'zone of peace', has been the issue of India's ambitions in the region.[39]

The fear of Indian hegemony is a factor that has argued against the eviction of a 'benign' superpower like the United States from the region. India was and remains a

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[37] S. Rajaratnam, The Straits Times, 11 Jan 1972, cited in V.K. Bhasin, Super Power Rivalry In The Indian Ocean, New Delhi, S. Chand & Company Ltd., 1981.
[38] Philip M. Allen, Security And Nationalism In The Indian Ocean: Lessons From The Latin Quarter Islands. p5.
[39] R.P. Anand, 'South Asia and the Law of the Sea: Problems and Prospects'. pp3-8.

great power in potential, if not in fact. Therefore, the exclusion of strong extra-regional powers from the Indian Ocean would have resulted in a 'power vacuum' that would see Indian hegemonic influence strengthen within the region. However, a situation where there are no powers that might serve as an effective counter weight to India in the Indian Ocean would have been as unwelcome to some of the smaller powers of the Indian Ocean rim as the presence of extra regional powers.

The Cold War and concern about the fact that the Indian Ocean region might be converted into a theatre of the Cold War between the two superpowers provided an opportunity for multilateral cooperation and the development of an embryonic sense of regionalism. However, contrary to the experience in the South West Pacific, South East Asian and Antarctic region, the Cold War and the threat of nuclear conflict in the Indian Ocean region proved to be an inadequate catalyst for the development of regionalism and multilateralism there. The proposals for a zone of peace fell short of the initial expectations of many and this inchoate expression of regionalism never coalesced into permanent and formal institutional structures for the region. Thus, the opportunities for *middlepowermanship* by a middle power like Australia have been limited. Instead, Australia has pursued a policy supporting the military presence of the United States within the region, as opposed to any unilateral initiative of its own, to forestall the escalation of any hostilities within the region or threat to its own interests. The limits of any unilateral action on the part of a middle power coupled with the absence of any appropriate regional multilateral security arrangements emphasised the importance of a powerful United States presence within the Indian Ocean region that was capable of defending the interests of an ally like Australia. Thus, the familiar *quid pro quo* of the Australia-United States relationship, in the

form of Australian support in exchange for United States support, was reprised in the Indian Ocean.

The United States In The Indian Ocean Region

As alluded to earlier, Australia's primary interests in the Indian Ocean appears to be based upon the fear that the former Soviet Union might gain a foothold in that region and thereby pose a threat to Australia's security. Certainly, much of the strategic thinking and literature concerning the Indian Ocean region has its roots in the politics of the Cold War. Neither of the super powers, the (former) Soviet Union or the United States, are littorals of the Indian Ocean. In fact, as Dieter Braun points out, the Indian Ocean is "the United States' most distant ocean while, for the Soviet Union, it is the second nearest (after the Pacific), [and] maritime access is both distant and fraught with complications."[40] Nevertheless, as is consistent with the behaviour of super powers, both have sought to maintain a presence in the Indian Ocean – at considerable expense – simply because they are super powers.

It might be said that the navies of super powers sail where they must to remind other states that super powers are able to project power where and when they please. Alfred Thayer Mahan's influential work on the significance of geographical factors on national power concluded that naval "control of the seas, and especially of strategically important narrow waterways, was crucial to great power status."[41] The Indian Ocean commands access to the gateways to three of the world's most

[40] Dieter Braun, The Indian Ocean: 'Region of Conflict or Peace Zone'? New York, St Martin's Press, 1983, pp21-22.

important narrow and strategic waterways, the Suez Canal, the Cape of Good Hope, and the Straits of Malacca.[42] Therefore, the naval presence of the super powers within the Indian Ocean is, in light of Mahan's theories, understandable, if not inevitable. As Bateman points out:

> "The Indian Ocean is of great importance both strategically and to world trade. It is a major highway of international trade that carries a considerable proportion of the world's shipping traffic. The countries of Northeast Asia, particularly Japan, are heavily dependent on oil from the Middle East and raw materials from other countries in the Indian Ocean region, including from Northwest Australia. Oil bound for Europe and North America is routed from the Persian Gulf around the Cape of Good Hope and into the Atlantic."[43]

The need to protect these sea-lanes against the threat of interdiction by a hostile rival or its satellites meant that a super power like the United States had to establish a naval presence, capable of defending its interests in the Indian Ocean region, during the Cold War. Darshan Singh estimated that in the period between 1972 and 1978, the United States despatched warships to the Indian Ocean up to 18 times.[44] These displays of 'gun boat diplomacy' included the despatch of a naval task force led by the nuclear carrier *Enterprise* into the Bay of Bengal in 1971 and another led by the *Constellation* into the Persian Gulf in 1973.[45] In so far as Australia shared an interest with its ally the United States in ensuring that sea routes within the Indian Ocean region remained open to commercial and military traffic, its interests are served by the presence of the latter within the region.

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[41] James E. Dougherty, Robert L. Pfaltzgraff, Jr., Contending Theories of International Relations: A Comprehensive Survey (second edition), New York, Harper & Row, 1981, p61. Alfred Thayer Mahan, The Influence of Seapower Upon History, 1660-1783, Boston, Little, Brown, 1987.
[42] Vivian Forbes, The Maritime Boundaries Of The Indian Ocean Region, pp36-41.
[43] Sam Bateman and Anthony Bergin, 'Building Blocks for Maritime Security in the Indian Ocean'. p243.
[44] Darshan Singh, 'Problems Of Security', in Indian Ocean And Great Powers, Saral Patra (ed.), New Delhi, Sterling Publishers Ptd Ltd. p54.
[45] Darshan Singh, 'Problems Of Security'. p54.

The naval presence of super powers within the Indian Ocean region is also a crude reminder of Realist assumptions in international relations. The naval presence of the super powers in the Indian Ocean was not only an expression of prestige but also a clear signal to other states that they possess the capability of projecting military power into that region against their enemies. However, the dynamics of the Cold War were such that the respective superpowers feared that the littorals of the Indian Ocean region might fall to the control of their rival. Hence, a naval presence in the region was deemed necessary by the respective superpowers to support allies and to deny outright control of the region to their rival.

In the context of the long standing hostilities between India and Pakistan and their 'flirtation' with both super powers, the presence of the latter within the region might also be seen as both a cause and a consequence. Sandy Gordon states that:

> "It would not be an exaggeration to say that cheap Soviet weapons have underwritten India's emergence as a major power in the Indian Ocean region."[46]

However, the 'friendliness' of India towards the Soviet Union and Soviet ship visits to Indian ports prompted an immediate reaction from the United States and China, who would then offer military and other forms of assistance to Pakistan and other South Asian nations. In the 1956 war between India and Pakistan, Chinese manoeuvres on the Himalayan frontier kept Indian troops pinned down. In response to potential Chinese assistance to Pakistan when another confrontation with the latter was imminent, India signed a twenty-year Treaty of Peace, Friendship and Cooperation with the Soviet Union in 1971.[47]

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[46] Sandy Gordon, The Search For Substance: Australia-India Relations Into The Nineties And Beyond. p11.

[47] Sandy Gordon, The Search For Substance: Australia-India Relations Into The Nineties And Beyond. p12.

Similarly, United States policies in the Indian Ocean region have been guided by its perceptions of the Soviet threat.[48] In 1969, the United States took over and transformed the British possession of Diego Garcia into a military outpost in the Indian Ocean and it has steadily upgraded its military capabilities in the region since.[49] The United States incorporated Diego Garcia into a worldwide chain of strategic military facilities capable of supporting aerial and naval operations, as well as providing surveillance and communications, in defence of American strategic interests.[50] It is also suspected that the American base at Diego Garcia is capable of deploying nuclear weapons.[51]

Although the Soviet Union had "no comparably versatile military facilities at its disposal anywhere in the Indian Ocean area",[52] it did maintain regular ships' visit to the ports of its allies and friendly powers in the region. The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1980 also meant that it had control of a littoral of an Indian Ocean littoral. Indeed, Chinese policies were coloured by the belief that the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan was an attempt to gain access to the Indian Ocean. Australia shared these apprehensions about the Soviet presence in the Indian Ocean.

> "... to the extent that the Australian view of the Indian Ocean region was one of instability and threat, the rapidly increasing US presence in the latter part of the 1970s and 1980s was on the whole welcomed by Australia."[53]

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[48] For a brief survey of the military forces deployed by the super powers in the Indian Ocean in the mid 80s, see M.C.W. Pinto, 'The Indian Ocean As A Zone Of Peace', in The Denuclearisation Of The Oceans, R.B. Byers (ed.), London, Croom Helm, 1986. pp148-151.

[49] This was accomplished through a treaty that provided the Americans with the right to use the island for military purposes.

[50] Dieter Braun, The Indian Ocean: 'Region of Conflict or Peace Zone'? pp39-47.

[51] A Nizamov, 'A Zone Of Peace, Good Neighbourliness And Cooperation', in Indian Ocean And Great Powers, Saral Patra (ed.), New Delhi, Sterling Publishers Ptd Ltd. p20.

[52] A Nizamov, 'A Zone Of Peace, Good Neighbourliness And Cooperation', in Indian Ocean And Great Powers, Saral Patra (ed.), New Delhi, Sterling Publishers Ptd Ltd. p20.

[53] Sandy Gordon, The Search For Substance: Australia-India Relations Into The Nineties And Beyond. p15.

Therefore, in view of the limited utility of any unilateral Australian response to a Soviet threat, Australia married its interests to that of the United States and relied on the latter to defend their common interests within the Indian Ocean region.

The Limits Of A Middle Power

It has been argued that Australia's contemporary interests in the Indian Ocean region are ill defined and that its capacity to defend those interests, whatever they might be, are limited. As it has been proposed earlier that a middle power, such as Australia, would have both the ambition and the capacity to defend its interests within its geographic region,[54] its inconspicuous role within the Indian Ocean leads to two inferences. The first is the inference that Australia is not really a part of the Indian Ocean region as earlier suggested and therefore cannot be expected to play a significant role within that region as a middle power. The second inference is that the earlier assumptions about the interests and capabilities possessed by middle powers within their own geographic region are wrong. And that while a great power is capable of defending interests throughout the general state system, the capacity of a middle power to do the same within regional subsystems is subject to geopolitical variables.

That Australia is geographically situated within the Indian Ocean region is obvious. However, geography is only one aspect of regionalism and it is also clear that the consciousness of a regional identity that would mark the polities of the Indian Ocean

[54] See Chapter 2.

region as a collective has yet to emerge. Therefore, until a genuine sense of regionalism of which Australia is a part emerges, Australia's casual interest in the Indian Ocean is understandable and likely to remain unchanged.

Australia's capacity to defend its interests, ill defined though they might be, within the Indian Ocean region is a better test of whether the earlier assumptions about middle powers are valid. Australia's middle powers capabilities have been sufficient to enable it to play a prominent role in resisting the spread of communism during the Cold War within the South West Pacific and South East Asian regions. In contrast, Australia's capacity to play a significant role within the Indian Ocean region have been limited because its capabilities as a middle power proved inadequate when confronted by much larger states and the absence of regional multilateral institutional arrangements within that region. As a middle power, Australia's capacity to unilaterally assume a role of influence in the Indian Ocean region, which is inhabited by more powerful and certainly more populous states, is limited. Instead, Australia has relied on its 'great and powerful friends', Great Britain and later the United States, to defend its interests in the Indian Ocean region.

The end of the cold war signalled the end of a period of confrontation between the United States and the Soviet Union in the Indian Ocean. However, many of the strategic issues that underpinned the interests of the super powers in the Indian Ocean remain. The Indian Ocean continues to be of vital strategic importance as a major highway of sea-borne trade and communication. The national interests of many nations continue to be dependent on their safe and free access to these sea-lanes of the Indian Ocean. The use of naval power continues to be a factor affecting

the politics of the region, as the Gulf War and subsequent embargo on Iraq so aptly demonstrated.

The decline and eventual collapse of the Soviet Union in the early 1990s accomplished what the proposed Zone of Peace was never able to fully achieve. The Indian Ocean is no longer an arena of confrontation between extra-regional super powers and their satellites. Even though the American naval base at Diego Garcia remains, the danger of a confrontation between extra regional military giants in the Indian Ocean has receded. Nevertheless, the geo-political realities of the Indian Ocean are such that issues that may potentially be of serious concern remain, even though there does not appear to be a pressing need to deal with those issues at present. Thus, complacency about the Indian Ocean region is unwise as the recent nuclear test by India demonstrated. The recent explosion of a nuclear device by India, and subsequently by Pakistan, in expressions of nationalistic chauvinism has not only buried any residual hopes for a nuclear free zone, it also demonstrated that the potential for nuclear conflict remains a serious threat within the Indian Ocean region.

Strategic analysts, including Commodore (retired) Bateman have argued that the Indian Ocean region remains strategically relevant to Australia.[55] This is a point reiterated by Vice Admiral MacDougall of the Royal Australian Navy, who states:

> "My feeling is that more could be done to foster cooperation in the Indian Ocean region. Nevertheless, there is a growing awareness in the region of the need to be more involved in the Indian Ocean especially as the sea lines of communication through the Indian Ocean region are vital in world trade terms. In particular, major global strategic interests are focused on the Arabian Gulf and its approaches where 60% of the world's oil supplies are located and a

[55] Sam Bateman and Anthony Bergin, 'Building Blocks for Maritime Security in the Indian Ocean'. & Sam Bateman, 'The Indian Ocean in Australia's Maritime Strategy'.

> huge volume of these supplies, and other trade, crosses the Indian Ocean – including 30% of Australia's trade."[56]

The Indian Ocean continues to be a vital conduit for international trade.[57] Any conflict in the Indian Ocean that might potentially disrupt the sea-lanes would be would be a threat to Australian interests. Indeed, the end of the impasse between the superpowers in the Indian Ocean may well lead to a situation where conflict between states, no longer inhibited by the threat of nuclear holocaust, becomes more common, prone to violence, and disruptive. J. Malik points out that:

> "Australia also maintains a national as well as Western alliance interest in an uninterrupted supply of the Persian Gulf oil and in the free flow of international shipping through the [Indian Ocean] region."[58]

The security of sea-lanes of communication through the Indian Ocean was imperative during the Cold War. Although the need to counter the Soviet threat has ended, the operational effectiveness of the Western Alliance remains contingent upon the security of the supply lines represented by these sea-lanes.

Apart from purely strategic considerations, the sea-lanes of communication that pass through the Indian Ocean are also important to Australia's commercial interests. Australia's major trading partners, especially Japan, rely heavily on Persian Gulf oil and other commodities shipped through the sea routes in the Indian Ocean, and any disruption to that traffic would have an adverse impact on their, and indirectly on Australia's national interests.

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[56] I.D.G. MacDougall, 'The Naval View', Paper presented at Australia's Maritime Bridge Into Asia conference, 17-19 November 1993, held in Canberra, 1993. p2.
[57] Sam Bateman, 'The Indian Ocean in Australia's Maritime Strategy', in Maritime Studies 71, July/August 1993.
[58] J. Mohan Malik, The Gulf War: Australia's Role And Asian-Pacific Responses. p9.

The changes in the geopolitical environment within the Indian Ocean region also demand a re-assessment of Australian priorities. Even before the Cold War ended, Australia has had a growing appreciation of the strategic significance of the Indian Ocean region in its own right aside from the issue of the Soviet Union. Malik states:

> "During the past decade, the erstwhile trans-Pacific orientation of Australian defence policy has been abandoned in favour of a more balanced approach, which also takes into account security threats emanating from the Indian Ocean region. Consequently, Australia appears to be gradually accepting a more active regional role in the Pacific as well as Indian Ocean regions."[59]

The growing military and in particular naval capabilities of the Indian Ocean littoral states can not be summarily discounted, even if they did not represent a serious threat to Australian security at present.

Although the Cold War has ended, India appears committed to retaining and expanding its naval capability. India has retired the *Vikrant*, one of its two aircraft carriers, but the *Viraat*, remains operational.[60] Even though economic problems and budgetary priorities have limited India's capacity to expand its military capabilities, it has continued to maintain its rhetoric to do so. India has publicly stated its plans to acquire another aircraft carrier, the Russian carrier *Admiral Gorshkov*, which is presently on lease to the Indian navy.[61] In addition, India has continued to develop major mainland naval base at Karwar and Port Blair, even during a period of fiscal

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[59] J. Mohan Malik, The Gulf War: Australia's Role And Asian-Pacific Responses. p1.
[60] A.D. Gordon, 'India, Neigbourhood And Region'. p186.
[61] The issue of whether or not India will get a third aircraft carrier is shrouded in a great deal of uncertainty. The latest news (NEW DELHI, June 22, 1997 (PTI)) is that the price tag of the Admiral Gorshkov is unacceptable to the Indian Navy, and hence there are now plans to manufacture its own air defence ship (ADS), a smaller version of an aircraft carrier instead. Nevertheless, regardless of how or when, it does appear that India is determined to maintain the capacity for power projection (albeit a limited capacity).

stringency in 1993.[62] India's ambition for naval acquisitions raises some issues. As Richard Armitage observes:

> "Given her great size and enormous population, one doesn't necessarily begrudge India a robust military capability; yet when India has thus far been unable to articulate the foreign and defence policy into which that robust capability fits, then queries become unavoidable."[63]

The Southeast Asian nations have also begun to modernise and expand their naval capabilities to defend their interests in the South China Sea. There has been much written about the significance of the growing naval capabilities for force in the South China Sea, especially in light of the dispute over the Spratly Islands. In contrast, there has been very little said about the implications that these same naval forces would have for the Indian Ocean, a region to which many of the ASEAN states also belong. The fact that many of the South East Asian states, including Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, and Thailand are also littorals of the Indian Ocean is often overlooked. A modern and expanding navy that is capable of operations in the South China Sea is equally capable of operations in the Indian Ocean. This was a factor when (ex) President Sukarno of Indonesia offered to send two submarines into India's maritime territory in the Andaman and Nicobars as a diversion in support of Pakistan during the Indo-Pakistan war of 1965.[64] Even though relatively little interest has been expressed by any South East Asian state in the Indian Ocean since, the potential ability of states in the South East Asian region to play a role in the Indian

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[62] Sandy Gordon, The Search For Substance: Australia-India Relations Into The Nineties And Beyond. pp68-69.
[63] Richard Armitage, 'Not History's End, But History's Resumption', in Tomorrow's Pacific, Papers presented at a Conference of IPA Pacific Security Research Institute and the US Heritage Foundation, Perth, 1993.
[64] Sandy Gordon, The Search For Substance: Australia-India Relations Into The Nineties And Beyond. p81.

Ocean remains a fact of geography.[65] Admiral MacDougall acknowledges this strategic reality of Australia's geography, when he states:

> "The Australian decision to base up to half of our fleet on the West Coast is evidence of the importance we place in maintaining a presence in the Indian Ocean. While this move puts us nearer our primary interests in Southeast Asia, it will also allow us to focus more clearly on Indian Ocean security."[66]

Hence, there is a growing appreciation that concerns over security and stability in East Asian waters should logically also apply in the Indian Ocean.

Unlike the South East Asian or Antarctic regions, the issue of overlapping jurisdictional claims has not been prominent in the Indian Ocean. Nevertheless, they exist. The introduction of the United Nations Law of the Sea saw many boundaries redrawn and notwithstanding the dispute resolution mechanisms built into UNCLOS, disagreement on the delimitation of new boundaries could be a strong cause for conflict.[67] The maritime boundary between India and Pakistan has yet to be demarcated. There is a serious dispute between Bangladesh and its neighbours India and Burma about the delimitation of their respective overlapping boundaries. And the Maldives' maritime claims are potentially subject to dispute from the UK and Mauritius.[68] These and other maritime disputes[69] are exacerbated by the political, racial, and religious tensions in South Asia, which would make resolution even more difficult (in contrast to the dispute in the South China Sea where relations among the claimants are relatively cordial by comparison).

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[65] Sandy Gordon, The Search For Substance: Australia-India Relations Into The Nineties And Beyond. pp81-88.

[66] I.D.G. MacDougall, 'The Naval View', Paper presented at Australia's Maritime Bridge Into Asia conference, 17-19 November 1993, held in Canberra, 1993. pp2-3.

[67] For a brief survey of the maritime disputes in the Indian Ocean region, see Victor Prescott, The Maritime Political Boundaries Of The World. pp158-178.

In the 1990s, several factors have altered Australia's perspective on the Indian Ocean. The cold war has ended and the littorals of the region are growing in strength. Consequently, the Australian approach towards the Indian Ocean must change as well. Even though it is still possible for a superpower such as the United States to play 'global cop' in the region (and for Australia to benefit from such an arrangement as its ally), any attempt to influence regional affairs through extra-regional American power would certainly be regarded with great suspicion. For example, the despatch of a United States carrier group into the Bay of Bengal in 1971 (a period of tension involving India, Bangladesh and Pakistan) was regarded by India as expression of coercive (and nuclear) diplomacy.[70] Malik also points out that:

> "One day after Iraq occupied Kuwait came news of the US deployment of naval forces in the Gulf. Given India's antipathy to the involvement of extra-regional powers in regional conflicts, such a development was seen as 'ominous' by Indian foreign policy makers.[71]

Therefore, over-reliance on the United States might prove counter-productive for Australia because any exercise of American power within the Indian Ocean region has the potential to excite resentment from the littorals there. Thus, there is a need to explore alternative arrangements through which Australia might defend its interests within the Indian Ocean region.

Many of the issues pertaining to resource management, conservation, pollution and other matters in the Indian Ocean also require multilateral responses[72] and can not be resolved simply by the hegemonic presence of any power, even one as powerful as

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[68] R.P. Anand, 'South Asia and the Law of the Sea: Problems and Prospects'. p19

[69] See R.P. Anand, 'South Asia and the Law of the Sea: Problems and Prospects'. pp9-40.

[70] Jasjit Singh, 'Proliferation Issues In The Indian Ocean Area In The Post Cold War Era', paper presented at the International Seminar On Changing Prospects For Peace In The Indian Ocean Area, Centre For Indian Ocean Studies, Perth, 14-16 January 1991. p13.

[71] J. Mohan Malik, The Gulf War: Australia's Role And Asian-Pacific Responses. p10.

the United States. Hence, Australia has begun to engage the region as a middle power, independent of its close relationship with the United States.

In the Indian Ocean region, the lack of a clearly defined regional identity has proven to be a stumbling block in any effort towards multilateral engagement. In the attempt to find "common ground on which to build a sense of regional community, maritime issues have emerged as a strong common interest of Indian Ocean littorals and island countries."[73] However, MacDougall warns that:

> "Given the size of the Indian Ocean and the political, economic and cultural diversity of its littoral states, the foreseeable future is unlikely to bring speedy developments in maritime cooperation."[74]

Nevertheless, in 1995, there were two inter-governmental meetings in Mauritius on economic and trade issues pertaining to the Indian Ocean region. There was also a 'track-two' meeting in Perth to "actively and constructively explore possibilities for regional cooperation across a notional Indian Ocean 'region'."[75] Naval exercises involving Australia and India have also been initiated in an effort to promote cooperation, along with visits from senior naval officers, including those from India and Pakistan to conferences and seminars hosted by Australia.[76] The Centre For Maritime Policy in Woolongong, Australia, has also been actively canvassing discussion and interest in the Indian Ocean.[77]

A platform upon which Australia can build potential regional multilateral arrangements for the Indian Ocean region is its relationship with various South East

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[72] Sam Bateman, 'The Indian Ocean in Australia's Maritime Strategy'. pp11-16.
[73] Centre for Maritime Policy, Newsletter No.2, 31 Jan 1996.
[74] I.D.G. MacDougall, 'The Naval View'. p3.
[75] Centre for Maritime Policy, Newsletter No.2, 31 Jan 1996.
[76] I.D.G. MacDougall, 'The Naval View'. p3.
[77] See www.uow.edu.au/arts/mar_pol.

Asian states, which are also Indian Ocean littorals. Australia is already engaged in regular talks and a variety of multilateral initiatives with these states on a variety of issues, including maritime surveillance, conflict resolution on the Spratly Islands, environmental management in South East Asian waters, sea-robbery in the Malacca Straits and other issues. Such initiatives have invariably been focused on maritime issues specific to the South East Asian region and scant attention has been given to the Indian Ocean in Australian foreign policy. Nevertheless, it should still be feasible to expand the scope of some of these initiatives to include the Indian Ocean or to broaden the some of the existing mechanisms in South East Asia to include the littorals of the Indian Ocean as well.

Even though Australia has yet to assume an influential role within the Indian Ocean region, there are several factors that suggest it might be able to do so eventually. As a wealthy (and relatively congenial) middle power, Australia enjoys prestige in the region. Australia also possesses the resources to sponsor the "track two" initiatives and it has shown in the South East Asian region that such initiatives could prove useful in establishing common ground upon which subsequent international arrangements are built. Nor is Australia likely to be regarded with suspicion as having hegemonic aspirations even if it takes up a leadership role in the Indian Ocean region. And as Paul Dibb points out, Australia would still be able to capitalise on its traditional relationship with the Western great powers:

> "For Australia there is the particular point that, as a medium-sized power, we gained considerable international stature from being seen as one of the close inner group of United States allies (along with Britain and Canada)."[78]

[78] Paul Dibb, 'The Regional Outlook: the Australian Viewpoint', in Tomorrow's Pacific, Papers presented at a Conference of IPA Pacific Security Research Institute and the US Heritage Foundation, Perth, 1993.

In addition, Australia possesses the resources and expertise (assets that many of the other less developed States in the Indian Ocean region might lack) to fund and sustain initiatives for regional arrangements. Unfortunately, except for a few attempts to initiate 'track-two' meetings, most notably by the Centre for Maritime Studies in Wollongong, Australia yet to make any serious attempts to establish regional arrangements to address maritime issues in the Indian Ocean.

Conclusion

In the regions reviewed earlier, Australia demonstrated an interest in assuming a role of influence in regional affairs and the capacity to do so. Australian ambitions with regard to a role of regional influence have usually been based on the practice of *middlepowermanship*, which is in turn facilitated by regionalism. However, in contrast to the role that it has played in other regions, Australia's role in the Indian Ocean region has been modest. Australia has not exhibited much interest in playing a larger role within the Indian Ocean region and its capacity to assume such a role is uncertain. Australia was concerned with the threat of Soviet expansion within the Indian Ocean region and supported the presence of its ally, the US, to defend their mutual interests there. However, in contrast to the other regions where Australia has played a more prominent role, it has had relatively weak economic or other interests in the Indian Ocean region. Consequently, the pressure to assume a stronger role within the Indian Ocean region has been absent.

Australia's size and limited resources as a middle power also restrict its capacity to assume a more significant role within the Indian Ocean. From a structuralist

perspective, the presence of much larger states, such as India and Pakistan, limits the role of a middle power like Australia. From a process oriented perspective, the absence and resistance to the development of regional multilateral arrangements within the Indian Ocean region limits Australia's capacity to play a significant role in the region through alternative mechanisms of influence. Thus, Australia has traditionally relied upon and supported the presence of its great power allies, in particular the United States, to defend its interests within the Indian Ocean region.

Notwithstanding its lack of interest or success in assuming a more influential role within the Indian Ocean region, Australia is a wealthy middle power with considerable assets. Although Australia's post-Cold War interests within the Indian Ocean are largely inchoate, they may yet develop into something more substantial. Sea-lanes of communication important to Australia run through the Indian Ocean. The end of the Cold War removed the spectre of super-power conflict from the Indian Ocean but the potential for conflict among the littoral States remains. Many of the littoral States of the Indian Ocean have had a long history of hostilities with their neighbours. And as the littoral states of the Indian Ocean (including India, Pakistan, and the Southeast Asian nations) continue to develop and to strengthen their naval capabilities, the potential for the existing land-based hostilities to extend seaward would also increase.

A middle power like Australia has the potential to play an important role in defining the post Cold War environment within the Indian Ocean region in order to ensure that its interests remain protected. The strategy of *middlepowermanship* is a policy

that has been successfully pursued in other regions and represents Australia's best opportunity to secure a role of influence within the Indian Ocean region.[79]

[79] See Sam Bateman, 'The Indian Ocean in Australia's Maritime Strategy'.

CONCLUSION

Academic forays into relatively unexplored fields of study are always fraught with the danger of making more of an issue than it deserves. In querying the role of middle powers in international relations, there has been a conscious effort in this dissertation not to overstate the role of Australia within its region or to magnify the importance of issues beyond their real significance simply because they are the subjects of study. Nevertheless, the close scrutiny of Australia's role as a middle power in this dissertation has highlighted issues that are often overlooked in studies that focus on the actions of great powers but which are no less important as they also affect the dynamics of international relations. In particular, this dissertation introduces a methodological approach to investigate the role of middle powers and draw attention to factors that affect the foreign policy considerations of a middle power.

The thesis proposed in this dissertation is that middle powers like Australia are inclined to rely on multilateral institutional arrangements as a means of securing a role of regional influence. This thesis is based on the assumption that states can be usefully differentiated from one another in terms of power; and that middle powers are distinctively characterised by their ambition and their capacity to assume a role of significant influence in their own geographic region.

There have been differing accounts of how middle powers may play a role of influence in international relations and it is proposed that these explanations may be categorised into structuralist and process oriented perspectives of middle powers. Structuralist perspectives tend to be premised on Realist assumptions about the nature of the state system. They focus upon the physical attributes of a middle power and the extent to which the superior resources of a middle power can be brought into play against smaller or weaker states, or serve as an enticement to secure the patronage of a great power, in international relations. Whereas process oriented perspectives tend to be based on Idealist, Neoliberal or Rationalist assumptions about the nature of the state system. Process oriented perspectives are premised upon the presence of multilateral institutional arrangements within the state system and desirability of establishing such arrangements. They focus on the extent to which a middle power is able to exercise a leadership role with respect to such arrangements and exploit the opportunities presented by such arrangements to serve its own interests. These issues were addressed in chapters 1, 2 and 3 of this thesis and it was concluded that in the contemporary state system, middle powers are inclined to rely on multilateral institutional arrangements in foreign policy as a means of securing regional influence.

In chapter one, the context in which states operated was reviewed. The emergence of the general state system, the concept of power, and the growth of multilateral institutional arrangements as vehicles for state influence were discussed. It concluded that while power remained an important factor in the determination of foreign policy, the opportunities provided by multilateral institutional arrangements represented an increasingly significant avenue for states to defend their interests in international relations.

In chapter two, the concept of a middle power was explored. The various characteristics associated with the foreign policies of middle powers were canvassed. This included the traditional view that that a middle power could be described as a minor power capable of assuming the role of a great power within a regional subset of the general state system. Another trait that has been associated with middle powers is the alleged proclivity of the latter to engage in *middlepowermanship*, which might be loosely defined as participation, initiation, and support, for multilateral institutional arrangements. It concluded that in spite of the difference between perspectives that may be described as 'structuralist' and 'process oriented', a working definition of a middle power that may be generically applied in most situations could be developed. And it was proposed that a state with both the ambition and the capacity to assume a role of significant influence in a limited sphere of international relations, including within its geographic region, might be deemed a middle power.

In chapter three, the mindsets that have traditionally guided Australian foreign policy as a middle power were reviewed and two distinctive orientations in Australian foreign policy were highlighted. These two orientations have been described as the Conservative approach, which emphasised the bilateral relationship between middle power Australia and its great power allies; and the Labor approach, which emphasised multilateralism and regionalism. In this chapter, it was argued that these orientations really only differed on the issue of the degree of emphasis instead of representing diametrically opposed positions on foreign policy. It concluded by advancing the hypothesis that a middle power like Australia is attracted to the use of multilateral institutional arrangements and is likely to assume a role of leadership and influence within its geographic regions.

Four geographic regions, the South West Pacific, the Antarctic, South East Asia, and the Indian Ocean, were examined and Australia's role in each of these regions reviewed. Australia may claim to be a part of each of these regions and the investigation of its role as a middle power in these regions would establish if the empirical evidence supports the hypothesis. Towards that end, Australia's ambition and its capacity to assume a role of significant influence in each of these regions, as well as the means by which it employed to assume such a role, were queried.

The review of Australia's role, as a middle power, in the South West Pacific region highlighted the asymmetries of power that characterised the relationship between Australia and the Pacific Island states in that region. Australia's capacity to capitalise on this asymmetry to assume a hegemonic role in the South West Pacific region was clearly demonstrated in this chapter. However, it was argued that Australia sought to initiate and support regional multilateral institutional arrangements as vehicles for its influence in the region, as opposed to defending its interests through its capacity for crude coercion through its superior power. In accordance with the expectations of structuralist perspectives, Australia clearly possessed the capacity to exercise coercive influence in the South Pacific region. However, Australia was clearly disinclined to resort to blatant *realpolitik* measures to defend its interests in the South Pacific region. Instead, regional multilateral institutional arrangements furnished a middle power like Australia with the means to defend a broader range of interests within the South Pacific region.

Australia's role in the Antarctic region also highlighted the opportunities that regional multilateral institutional arrangements provided to a middle power such as Australia.

The asymmetries of power that characterised Australia's role in the South West Pacific region are absent in the Antarctic region. Indeed, Australia would rank low in any hierarchy of power that reflected the capabilities of the respective states engaged in the Antarctic region based on Realist premises. However, there is a strong network of multilateral institutional arrangements that have claimed jurisdiction over the Antarctic region and over the decision making on issues affecting the region. And it was argued that Australia has been able to seize the opportunities offered by these regional arrangements, collectively known as the Antarctic Treaty System, to assume a significant and influential role within the Antarctic region and thereby to defend its interests there successfully. Thus, even though the expectations of structuralist perspectives would have been a minor role for Australia within the Antarctic region, its experiences have been to the contrary. Instead, process oriented perspectives have been more successful in accounting for the influence enjoyed by a middle power like Australia within the Antarctic region.

Australia's role within the South East Asian region has been more difficult to explain. Australia could not claim for itself a dominant role within the South East Asian region on the basis of the asymmetries of power, such as that it enjoyed in the South West Pacific region. Nor could Australia claim for itself a significant and influential role within South East Asia that is similar to the part it played within the Antarctic Treaty System and the Antarctic region. Although there are regional institutional arrangements, notably ASEAN, that play a significant role in South East Asian regional affairs, Australia's involvement in these arrangements have been limited relative to the role it has been able to assume in similar multilateral arrangements in the South West Pacific and Antarctic regions. Instead, ambiguity about Australia's status in the South East

Asian region saw Australia excluded from full participation in some regional forums there. Nevertheless, it was argued that Australia's interests, as a middle power, to initiate regional multilateral arrangements remained strong in the South East Asian region and that the promotion of such arrangements serves Australia's interests. Therefore, even though its role within South East Asian regional multilateral institutional arrangements has been discreet, Australia has been able to successfully defend its interests and play a significant role through its persistent efforts at fostering habits of consultation and dialogue.

In contrast to its experience and strategy in the other three regions, Australia's role, as a middle power, in the Indian Ocean region has been anomalous. It was argued that Australia has demonstrated neither the ambition nor the capacity to exercise significant influence in its own right as a middle power within the Indian Ocean region. Instead, Australia has been content to support the presence of the United States in the Indian Ocean and to rely on the latter, its great and powerful friend, to defend its interests there. The Indian Ocean region is also distinct from the other regions in that multilateral institutional arrangements have not been significant within the region. Thus, process oriented perspectives have had little relevance. Indeed, the Indian Ocean region challenges arguments that suggest the inevitability of international cooperation and development of multilateral institutional arrangements. Instead, the inability of a middle power like Australia to assume a more significant role within the Indian Ocean region is more satisfactorily explained by the structuralist perspectives, which tend to assume that minor powers have a limited role in international relations whereas great powers have a larger role. Thus, the arguments that middle powers are only expected to play a role supportive of great power allies and may only assume a more direct role with the

acquiescence of the latter appear to match the situation in geographic regions such as the Indian Ocean region.

The review of Australia's role in four geographic regions provided evidence that supports the hypothesis that multilateral institutional arrangements enhance the capacity of a middle power like Australia to assume a role of leadership and influence within its geographic region.

	South Pacific region	**Antarctic region**	**South East Asian region**	**Indian Ocean region**
Ambition	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Capacity	Yes	Yes	Yes	No

Capacity For Influence Based On:

Physical Attributes	Yes			
Institutional Arrangements	Yes	Yes	Yes	
Other factors				Great Power Ally

In three of the four regions surveyed, Australia's capacity to exploit the opportunities provided by multilateral institutional arrangements has been the primary determinant of its ability, as a middle power, to defend its interests. In the South Pacific Region, there is also the additional factor of superior power. In an earlier era, simple superiority in terms of power might have been sufficient to enable a middle power like Australia to 'lord it over' weaker states in its geographic region. However, as the review of Australia's experience in the South West Pacific region has demonstrated, the contemporary state system is such that a more sophisticated approach is required. The use of crude coercive

influence has fallen into disrepute and the use of coercive influence is unlikely to serve the broad interests of middle powers, which would be more inclined to prefer a state system where multilateral institutional arrangements determined outcomes, as opposed to superior force.

Globalisation and increasing interdependence means an increased reliance on multilateral institutional arrangements and this is reflected in the South West Pacific, the Antarctic, and the South East Asian regions. These regions have witnessed a growth in the number of regional multilateral institutional arrangements and the scope of the functional roles performed by these arrangements is also expanding. In the South West Pacific, the Antarctic, and the South East Asian regions, regional multilateral institutional arrangements provided the principal forums for decision-making on regional affairs. Australia's prominent role in such regional forums in the South West Pacific and the Antarctic regions meant that it possessed a significant measure of influence over developments in those regions. Similarly, even though it is excluded from ASEAN, Australia's role in fostering a culture of consultation and dialogue have furnished it with an avenue for regional influence, as well as helping to secure a place for itself within other regional forums such as the ARF and APEC.

The fact that process oriented perspectives, as well as middle powers, have their limitations was clearly illustrated in the chapter on Australia's role in the Indian Ocean region. The review of Australia's role in the Indian Ocean region was useful in that it highlighted the fact that successful *middlepowermanship* is contingent upon the presence of viable multilateral institutional arrangements. It also demonstrated that there are regions where Neorealist assumptions carry greater weight than those of the Neoliberals

and that in such regions, there would be difficulty in developing multilateral institutional arrangements. Clearly, the situation in the Indian Ocean might change in the future and cooperative arrangements might become the norm in that region. Conversely, the circumstances that have led to the existing multilateral institutional arrangements in the other regions might also be challenged by future developments. Thus, the meta-theories that seek to explain the dynamics of international relations are subject to situational factors specific to a particular time or region. In the context of this thesis, this implies that in so far as a middle power like Australia is concerned, its geographic situation is such that multilateral institutional arrangements currently represent the means through which it can successfully assert influence and defend its interests within its regional environment. While the Indian Ocean region represents an exception to this general proposition, it does not invalidate it.

In the course of this thesis, other issues have been explored as well. This dissertation has also adapted conventional theories on international relations to the study of middle powers. In particular, it has tailored Neorealist and Neoliberal theories on the behaviour of states to the study of a middle power and applied this to the investigation of the foreign policy considerations of Australia within its geographic region. The situational factors that would render Neorealist assumptions applicable in the context of a middle power like Australia were discussed. And it has been argued that even where middle powers such as Australia were in a position to exploit the advantages of coercive power, they might still opt for co-operative multilateral arrangements, which are perceived as being a more effective means of defending their interests. Thus, this dissertation has argued that Neoliberalist arguments have provided a more compelling explanation on how middle powers are likely to react in international relations.

It appears self evident to say that minor powers must restrict their foreign policy to selectively targeted issues or their geographic regions because of the obvious limitations upon their capacity to engage other states in international affairs. Unlike major powers, which might claim an interest throughout the general state system, minor powers must be content with more modest objectives. However, middle powers stand out among minor powers, as polities with greater resources and logically that should imply a larger role in international affairs as well.

The literature suggests that regional subsets of the state system represent a sphere of international engagement in which middle powers might assume a significant, even a dominant role. This thesis demonstrated that a middle power like Australia could indeed assume a decisive role through its capacity for leadership in, or exploitation of, multilateral institutional arrangements. The use of multilateral institutional arrangements by minor powers to amplify their influence in international relations is by no means restricted to middle powers. Logically, many of the advantages derived by Australia from *middlepowermanship*, and demonstrated in this thesis, should be accessible to any affluent small power with the capacity for diplomatic activism in selected issues or geographic regions. Thus, another topic for further study would be to establish the extent to which small powers can emulate the practice of *middlepowermanship* and duplicate the success of middle powers in international relations. A study of this nature might redefine assumptions about the divide between small and middle powers in the state system.

In conclusion, this thesis has argued that Australia's role as a middle power is largely defined by the extent of its ability to influence the development and decision-making processes within regime arrangements that represent regional subsets of the global state system. It has demonstrated that the pursuit of, and participation in, regional multilateral institutional arrangements has offered a middle power like Australia significant opportunities to favourably influence regional developments in a fashion that served its interests, as well as enabled it to play a decisive role in its geographic region. It proposed that although Australia's capacity for Realist expressions of coercive power varied in different regions, its capacity for leadership role within regional multilateral institutional arrangements and its ability to exploit the opportunities presented by such arrangements have enabled it to assume an influential role in regional affairs.

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